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CHURCH LEADERS IN PRIMITIVE TIMES

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CHURCH LEADERS
IN
PRIMITIVE TIMES

Lectures on their Words and Works

DELIVERED IN

NORWICH CATHEDRAL

BY EMINENT

ANGLICAN DIVINES

WITH PREFACE BY

WILLIAM LEFROY, D.D.

DEAN OF NORWICH

SECOND EDITION

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PREFACE.

THE lectures published in this volume represent one phase of that work which the modern spirit expects the Cathedrals of the Church of England to undertake and to accomplish. Churchmen of all schools of thought are in the main agreed in expecting the mother church of each diocese to represent, adequately and completely, the standard to which devotional worship may attain. There the service of song reaches its highest expression. There the Psalter flows in praise, and has flowed in praise for centuries, with the regularity of the tides of the ocean. There the voices of holy and humble men of heart, belonging both to the East and West, are heard day by day, agelong in their language, yet interpreting the needs of the hour. There the Word of Life is read and expanded. There the Sacrament of Initiation and the Sacrament of Sustenance are administered. Thus Cathedral worship, devotional, continuous, and heaving with song, is the expression of the Church's praise. It bears abiding witness to the world of the power and the presence of the Invisible. It pleads with all to recognise Him whose tender mercy is over all His works.

But Cathedrals have other functions to fulfil. They must serve other ends than those which are associated with laud, joyous, ornate, regular. They are the one "House of Meeting" for these occasional services which the expansive life of the Church in recent days has both created and increased. Our great missionary organisations accentuate their place in the Church's enterprise by special Cathedral services. The Home and the Foreign divisions of that field, which is the world, resort to the Cathedral, to engage in united and urgent intercession; to communicate to thousands the message from the Lord above from His labourers below, from scenes white already to harvest, or red with the life-blood of those who lived in readiness to be offered. Choral Associations, in some dioceses representing hundreds of parishes and thousands of voices, gather in those venerable fanes to illustrate the power of unity, to manifest the elevating influence of song and of sympathy, and to return to their parishes, braced for larger effort, strengthened for higher service, encouraged by the indefinable, subtle, but certain power which flows from well-directed numerical strength. Temperance societies seek, from the Cathedral as a centre, to gain a hearty hearing on behalf of Christ-like self-denial. There are not in the world buildings in which such an appeal can be so fittingly made. They ascend in moral as well as in architectural domination high over all other structures. They are for the most part the abiding and consecrated representations of ancestral self-sacrifice. The

Cathedral ought to be the congenial home of the Temperance cause. It expresses, in solid strength, in abiding beauty, in pathetic peace, all the virtues which self-control and self-denial found and foster. Thus, these annual and occasional gatherings are made welcome to these venerable temples. The ancient becomes adapted to the modern. Present activities are encouraged by association with the generosities of the past. The larger life of the Church of the nineteenth century requires the stately structures of the Middle Ages. The uses to which these are now applied demonstrate a higher office for them than the presentation of a worship which was mainly spectacular.

And, possibly, of all branches of sacred service recognised and encouraged by the Cathedrals of England, it may be questioned if there is one more important than that represented by the Nave Services for the people. If a crowded attendance be regarded as the outward and visible sign of inward and spiritual appreciation, there cannot be a doubt as to the popularity of these modern methods of reaching masses of people. True, they draw off many from their parish churches. True, they attract large numbers of Nonconformists from their chapels. But they do more than either of these, however unwelcome the former may be. There are, unhappily, in all great centres of population, many persons who are unbound by any special parochial tie. The vast majority of this, I fear, increasing number, live in intellectual looseness towards any definite belief, creed, or society. They represent

probably varied religious sects, and even the Church. Such persons desert alike church and chapel; but they gravitate to the Cathedral. They are, I believe, to be found mainly in Nave Services. If this be the case, their importance is enormously increased. May not the supposition suggest a more hearty welcome being given by the Cathedral authorities to Evangelistic sermons?

The latest development of modern Church life, in connection with the due utilisation of our Cathedrals, may be described as educational. The communication of information by means of public lectures has for long been most popular in America. There the lecturer has a position and an importance which as yet are not his in the old country. But Cathedral lectures are not possible in the New World. They are, it is most thankworthy to be enabled to add, becoming a prominent feature in our religious life at home. As such they are entering into our recognised Cathedral arrangements.

The lectures contained in this volume represent one section of a programme which is being wrought out in faith, in patience, in hope. They are historical, and therefore they are educational. The theme is ecclesiastical history, and it is treated in connection with the leaders of thought and of action who lived and laboured in the primitive or sub-apostolic period, and on through the succeeding centuries, closing with the epoch-marking era of St. Augustine. Their treatment indicates the object in view and the class for whom this effort was organised. It was considered

helpful to associate the history of each period with the life of its leading character. The book thus consists mainly of a series of biographies. They are addressed, not so much to the scholar or to the student, as to the average inquirer. Whoever desires to have an intelligent idea of such men as Ignatius, Polycarp, Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Irenæus, Origen, Cyprian, Chrysostom, and others, will find all he needs in the lecture which treats of each. It may be that some into whose possession this volume may come will be inspired by its perusal with a desire for larger knowledge of at least some of these remarkable men. Of one thing I have a clear conviction: Ecclesiastical History is a powerful cordial against Ecclesiastical pessimism. Former days were not better than these; and the pages which follow will show that prolonged strife within the Church of the fourth and of the fifth centuries, whether it be represented by Arius in the East or by Pelagius or Donatus in the West, is an abiding appeal for patience to us in England in the closing years of the most pregnant century which has passed over this planet since the days of the holy Apostles.

It is most regretful that some of the lectures are not published in strict chronological order. I intended they should be. But their delivery was, necessarily, conditioned by the convenience and even possibilities of their authors. When one lecture became due, the lecturer was ransacking some of the great Continental libraries. Another lecturer was bound for New Zealand. A third was so overwhelmed with work

that his most kind promise to help became impossible at the proper time. Under such circumstances, a later "Life" took the place of the earlier, the printing went forward, and the order was thus deranged.

I must offer my heartfelt thanks to the clergy who aided me in the prosecution of my programme. They represent various departments of theological science. I can truly say, having heard all the lectures, that I did not hear one without being impressed with the consciousness of an amount of power each lecturer held in calm reserve. They are now committed to the public. They will live as a fresh though modest illustration of the resourcefulness of the Church of England, of the desire of those who have the care of our Cathedrals to utilise them, as occasion may suggest, for the circulation of information which must interest all who love our Lord, and of the readiness of the ablest and the busiest of our leading divines to give of their time, their labour, their experience, their learning to any scheme which has for its end the advancement of intelligence, a clearer knowledge of the past, and therein a desire to glorify God.

WILLIAM LEFROY, D.D.

Deanery, Norwich,
March 1896.

CONTENTS.

PAGE

ST. IGNATIUS AND ST. POLYCARP 1

By the VERY REV. F. W. FARRAR, D.D., F.R.S., Dean of Canterbury.

THE APOLOGY OF ARISTIDES 25

By the REV. J. ARMITAGE ROBINSON, D.D., Norissian Professor of Divinity, Cambridge (now Dean of Westminster).

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF JUSTIN MARTYR . . . 53

By the REV. CANON MEYRICK, M.A.

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF IRENÆUS 81

By the REV. PREBENDARY STANLEY LEATHES, D.D.

CYPRIAN 113

By the VEN. ARCHDEACON W. M. SINCLAIR, D.D.

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF ST. CHRYSOSTOM . . 141

By the REV. J. T. KINGSMILL, D.D.

TERTULLIAN 181

By the REV. G. A. SCHNEIDER, M.A.

CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA 255

By the RIGHT REV. F. H. CHASE, D.D. (now Lord Bishop of Ely).

PAGE

ORIGEN 299

By the REV. A. E. BROOKE, B.D.

EUSEBIUS OF CÆSAREA 325

By the REV. H. M. GWATKIN, M.A., Professor of Ecclesiastical History, Cambridge.

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF ST. ATHANASIUS . . . 343

By the REV. WILLIAM INCE, D.D., Regius Professor of Divinity, Oxford.

LIFE AND TIMES OF ST. AMBROSE 375

By BISHOP BARRY, D.D., D.C.L.

THE CHURCH IN THE CATACOMBS 415

By REV. HENRY GEE, D.D., F.S.A., Master of University College, Durham.

JEROME 447

By the RIGHT REV. T. W. DRURY, D.D., Church Missionary College, Islington (now Lord Bishop of Sodor and Man).

ST. AUGUSTINE 479

By the RIGHT REV. H. C. G. MOULE, D.D., Ridley Hall, Cambridge (now Lord Bishop of Durham).

St. Ignatius and St. Polycarp.

BY

F. W. FARRAR, D.D., F.R.S.

ARCHDEACON OF WESTMINSTER,
CHAPLAIN TO THE QUEEN, AND TO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS,
SUBSEQUENTLY DEAN OF CANTERBURY.

IGNATIUS AND POLYCARP.

In conferring on me the privilege of opening this important series of lectures on the Fathers, the Dean of Norwich assigned me the double task of introducing the subject generally, and of speaking specially about St. Ignatius and St. Polycarp. It would have been far easier to me, and I think more interesting to you, if the tasks could have been separated; but with very scant leisure to prepare, and only a brief time now at my disposal, I must throw myself on your kind indulgence, and, without further apology, must try to say what seems most likely to be suggestive and helpful.

Let us first ask, "Whom do we mean by the Fathers?" The term is vague and undefined. Some extend the age of the Fathers down to the death of St. Bernard in 1153, and count St. Anselm as the first of the Schoolmen Others regard the age of the Fathers as only going down to Gregory the Great, who died A.D. 604. The Fathers, again, are often divided into the Apostolical Fathers, who were more or less contemporary with the Apostles; the Ante-Nicene Fathers, down to the Council of Nice, A.D. 325,

and the Post-Nicene after that date. They are also classed by their countries, as by the two great divisions of Greek and Latin; and as African, Gallican, Cappadocian, and so forth. Again, they are classed by the nature of their writings, as special Apologists against Heretics, and general Apologists against Jews and Pagans; as theologians, like the Gregories; as exegetes, like Augustine; as great religious orators, like Chrysostom; and by numerous other subdivisions. Eight of them were singled out as pre-eminently the Doctors Ecclesiæ; in the Church of the East—Athanasius, Basil, Chrysostom, and Gregory of Nazianzus; in the Church of the West—Jerome, Ambrose, Augustine, and Gregory the Great, who best represent the theology, the exegesis, the homiletic eloquence, and the saintly aspirations of the Post-Nicene and victorious Church.

Our next question must be, "What do we expect to gain by studying their works and actions?" I answer, first, that there is an inexhaustible human significance about all men who have lived noble lives, and have helped to uplift the world into truth and righteousness by their writings and their examples. The life of *any* man has in it the elements of an eternal interest—yes, even of those whom Milton calls "the common rout," who—

> "Grow up and perish as the summer fly,
> Heads without name, no more remembered."

But especially interesting are the lives of men

eminently adorned to some great work, with gifts and graces. The life of every good man who has risen above the dead level of that plane of ordinary existence, in which "every molehill is a mountain, and every thistle a forest tree," has a far deeper interest than ordinary lives. The *influence* of such a man—that which has flowed from his soul into the souls of his fellows—the electric flash and thrill of his genius has been a power in innumerable other lives. The richest part of all history is biography. History is something more than a pageant. It is, as Bolingbroke said, "Philosophy teaching by examples." "Great men," said Carlyle, "are the inspired texts of that Divine Book of Revelation, of which a chapter is completed from epoch to epoch, and by some named history." But this simply human interest is indefinitely deepened when we deal with the lives and works of those who have played a great part in some memorable epoch. It becomes deepest of all when men have helped to mould the religious thoughts, which sway our inmost hearts. How worthy, then, of our attention should be the early teachers and writers of that Faith which is the faith not only of the future, but of Eternity—the early heralds and promoters of that Kingdom which is an everlasting kingdom—of that dominion of Christ which shall continue for all ages. In contemplating their thoughts and records, we look at the rock whence we were hewed, and the hole of the pit whence we were digged.

In the lives of the Fathers of the first four centuries

are intertwined two separate sources of interest—the history of the world and of the Church; first, the history of the Church in the world; and then, alas! of the world in the Church. The victory of Christianity is the most stupendous and the most thrilling drama which was ever played out on the stage of human destiny. We cannot study the lives of the Fathers without being brought into contact with the changing phases of secular and religious life. In the world we watch the slow death and disintegration of the grand old Roman Empire, till—

> "Rome, whom mighty kingdoms curtsied to,
> Like a forlorn and desperate castaway
> Did shameful execution on herself."

We see first her line of Julian, Claudian, and Flavian Cæsars dizzy with the vertigo and blood-poison of autocracy, from sanguinary Nero to infamous Domitian, their perilous purple stabbed through and through with dagger-thrusts. We see her Adoptive emperors, vigorous Trojan, manly Antoninus, Marcus Aurelius the white flower of Pagan morality, the unconscious reflection in the West of the glory of the Sun of Righteousness which had risen in the East. We see her Barrack and Soldier emperors, from the brave Septimius Severus to the persecuting Diocletian. We see her Partnership and Theological emperors, the dazzling and ambiguous Constantine; the pompous and dogged Constantius; the mingled magnanimity and meanness of Julian the Apostate; the forcible-feeble incapacity of the Arian Valens; the charming boy-

hood of Gratian; the soldier-like fidelity and manliness of Theodosius; the stupid, sullen, and flaccid degeneracy of his two sons. And we catch something more than a glimpse of many ancient cities in which growing Christianity, in the flush and bloom of its early fervour, was wrestling shoulder to shoulder with the decrepit forces of a dying Paganism. We see Rome, from which the Emperor retires to Byzantium before the growing power of Popes; Antioch with its wit, its cynicism, its licentiousness, its terrors, and its tumults; Alexandria with its Egyptian superstitions, its seething intellectual and political excitement, its monks, its martyrs, and its philosophers. We see Athens with its sophists and rhetoricians, and the boyish pranks of its University students; Carthage with its luxuries and temptations; Jerusalem with its disorderly pilgrimages and debased population; Constantinople with its voluptuous splendours and its abysmal corruption; and we catch glimpses of little provincial towns like Nyssa and Hippo and Nazianzus and Tours; and we learn that in all ages the lives and hearts of men are swayed by the same motives, hopes, and fears.

When we turn from this deeply interesting observation of the world to the Church, we see the same diversities—the recluse in his study; the monk in his cell; the persecuted gatherings of slaves and artisans in the Catacombs; the wealthy and fashionable congregations in crowded basilicas; Christian families in their happy homes; the Bishop in his pulpit; the Emperor

presiding at the council; noble ladies assembled at Jerome's Bible-classes under the gilded roof of the Aventine; poor Hermits making their desert lauras resound with psalms. We must be prepared for immense and bitter disappointments. Many who were called Christians were infinitely far from being Christ-like. We shall deplore the ambitious rivalry of priests fiercely contending for episcopal thrones; we shall see Church synods swept by storms of ferocious turbulence, and dragging the passions of hell into the affairs of heaven. We shall see great Metropolitans sometimes disgracing their profession by haughty insolence, sometimes defeated by intrigues of women and eunuchs in the gorgeous palaces of Constantinople or Milan. We shall watch the growth of the subtle heresies of Montanus, Arius, and Apollinaris. We shall shudder at the corruptions of the Manichees and the frenzies of the Donatists. Worse than all this, we shall stand by the cradle of many superstitions which slowly and surely infected the pure faith of Christianity. We shall observe the painful moral deterioration of a clergy forced into compulsory celibacy; the exaggerated, unscriptural asceticism which degraded marriage into a miserable concession; the growth of pompous and semi-pagan ceremonies, of fetichistic relic-worship, of frantic fanaticism, of religious persecution, of sacerdotal arrogance. We shall see the free large spirit of the Gospel bound hand and foot by the reimposition of Jewish formalism and Jewish bondage. But out of the turmoil and decadence rise

noble and saintly figures of men, who, like all the best and bravest men in every age, alike in the Church and in the world, have been hated and persecuted because they loved truths and hated falsities, loved righteousness and hated iniquity. We shall learn to love the profound and gentle Origen; the undaunted Athanasius standing alone against the world; the sensitive, contemplative Gregory of Nazianzus; the brilliant, learned, and passionate Jerome; the fiery and eloquent Chrysostom; the emotional, many-sided Augustine; the eccentric Martin; the lordly Ambrose; the statesman-like imperious Basil. These men and others like them had, as we all have, their errors, moral and intellectual; but after all deductions made, they were true servants and saints of God, with His name written upon their foreheads.

Let me now for one moment glance at the general characteristics of the first four centuries. The first century is the Apostolic age; but even that century saw the beginnings of Christian literature outside the New Testament in the Epistle of Clement of Rome and the Epistle of Barnabas. It was the century of planting, the century of dissemination. The second century is that of the Apologists, in which Christianity laid still deeper the foundations of her future victory by reasoning, by innocence, and by heroic endurance. It is the century of Ignatius, of Polycarp, of Justin Martyr, and of Clement of Alexandria. The third century is marked chiefly by the impassioned pleadings of Tertullian; the profound, indelibly influential teaching of

the philosophic Origen; the somewhat superficial ecclesiasticism and monarchical episcopacy of Cyprian. It closed with the era of martyrs in the reign of Diocletian. The fourth century is rich in great events and developments. It is marked by the conversion of the Empire under Constantine; the rise of hermitism and monasticism; the growth of the Arian heresy; the mighty stand made by Athanasius; the great œcumenical councils of Nice and Constantinople; the futile attempts of Julian the Apostate to galvanise into life the corpse of Paganism; the learned histories of Eusebius; the stormy prelacies of Gregory at Constantinople, of Ambrose at Milan, of Basil at Cæsarea; the vehement eloquence and admirable exegesis of the great Chrysostom. To the fifth century belongs mainly the world-wide work of Jerome and of Augustine; the fall of Rome; the advancing tides of barbarians; the third and fourth œcumenical councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon. It ends in 496 with the conversion of Clovis, and practically completes the age of the Fathers.

We have but one more point to consider before entering on the more special part of my subject, but it is an important one, namely, "What is the real authority of the Fathers?"

Now, I am here to speak the truth, and nothing but the truth, and should scorn myself beyond expression if any desire to win the applause of parties or of Church newspapers should tempt me for one moment to palter with the plain truth; to pander to any ecclesiastical conventions, or illusions, or pseudo-traditions, or shams

or euphemisms whatsoever. I would say, as the hero said in Homer three thousand years ago—

> "Who dares think one thing and another tell,
> My soul detests him as the gates of hell."

I say at once that the Fathers have an authority, and a high authority in many instances, as witnesses to fact, to catholic doctrine, and to primitive custom; while individually, when they happened to be students like St. Jerome, thinkers like Origen, theologians like St. Athanasius, men of practical wisdom and insight like St. Ambrose, and men of vivid genius or brilliant eloquence like St. Chrysostom and St. Augustine, they have just the same authority, and no more, as rightly belongs always to learning and wisdom and genius and insight.

On the other hand, I cannot say too firmly or too decisively, as an absolutely indisputable fact—a fact which cannot be refuted by argument, though it may be glossed over by sophism—that the Fathers are not final authorities, or in the most remotely distant sense of the word sacred authorities or infallible authorities, either as witnesses or instructors, either on matters of fact, or on matters of doctrine, or on matters of interpretation, or even on the moral rule of life. The pages of the Fathers, as every one knows who cares to read them with open eyes, teem with errors. The Fathers were men who differed in no sense from ourselves. They were subject—fully as much as ourselves—to all human frailties of temper, infirmities of will,

errors of judgment, and limitations of insight. They contradict one another on many points; their asserted facts are often untenable; their reasonings are often feeble; their method of dealing with truth is to our eyes not always perfectly straightforward; their intellectual system of interpretation is to a large extent Judaic and impossible. To erect the Fathers into final authorities is nothing more nor less than a historic, a literary, and a theologic fraud. It may impose upon the ignorant; it may deceive the unwary; it may parade shreds of perverted metaphor and snippings of dishonestly manipulated quotations; but no unbiassed scholar could be guilty—and every honest and well-informed man ought to be ashamed—of adopting methods of controversy so fruitless and unreal as to give to the Fathers an authority which they never dreamed of conceding to each other. To surround their *ipse dixit* with sanctity when not they only, but whole Councils and Churches, have erred, is to be guilty of useless self-delusion. Milton, with the high courage of a stainless mind which knew that nothing but truth can possibly be acceptable to the God of truth, said, and said rightly: "If a Father says anything, unless it can be proved by Scripture or reason, I shall judge it precisely as I should if any one else had said it."

We read the Fathers for example of life; we read them for instruction in manners; we read them as witnesses of contemporary opinion; we read them for whatever there may be in them of holy exhortation or wise utterance; but otherwise we read them precisely as we

would read Hooker, or Andrewes, or Butler, or Bishop Lightfoot. As we read we weigh, and if on weighing we find their statements wanting, we reject them without a second thought. The literature which the Fathers have bequeathed to us is full of beauty, eloquence, wisdom, and spiritual nobleness; but it is human, and in no sense whatever is it co-ordinate with the one legitimate authority which alone the Church of England recognises, the authority of the Word of God.

Having thus tried to fulfil the first part of my task, I turn to the second, which is to speak to you of St. Ignatius and St. Polycarp. On the ordinary facts of their lives, which you can read in any dictionary, I need not dwell. It would be the merest waste of precious time to recount to you legends or thrilling but well-known incidents of the way in which they laid down their lives for the truth of Christ. Let us rather turn to other considerations.

Ignatius was probably by birth a pagan slave; he was perhaps converted to Christianity after a sinful youth, and became the second, or, if we include St. Peter, third Bishop of Antioch. He is said to have introduced antiphonal singing into the Eastern Church. All that we further know of him is contained in the seven short letters which he wrote on his way to Rome to be flung to the wild beasts in the Coliseum, in consequence of a local persecution in the reign of Trajan. Guarded by his Roman legionaries, whom he called his "ten leopards," who were a sore trial to him by their cruelties and exactions, he made his way

through Asia and Europe to Rome. A halt at Smyrna enabled him to write four letters to the Churches of Ephesus, Magnesia, Tralles, and Rome. Another halt at Troas enabled him to write three more to the Churches of Smyrna and Philadelphia and to Polycarp. To these, probably at the close of the fourth century, were added eight other letters, which were stupid and clumsy forgeries, once used by the Church of Rome to support her errors and superstitions, but now abandoned even by her, and rightly characterised by Calvin as "paltry rubbish."

Of these seven letters Canon Cureton in 1845 discovered a much shorter Syriac recension in the British Museum, and it was at first thought by many that these brief epitomes were alone genuine. But that all the seven are genuine may now be regarded as proved by two great scholars, Zahn in Germany, and Bishop Lightfoot in England. The martyr went his way, and perished in Rome, probably in A.D. 115; but his seven letters have left one of those gleams of partial and transient light by which we are alone able to catch even a glimpse of the Church of the early years of the second century. And this gleam is so partial and so intermittent as to have given rise to endless perplexities. The glimpse is unquestionably surprising in many ways. The theology is orthodox, although one expression would seem to collide with Nicene phraseology, but the most distinctive and most astonishing feature is at first sight the extravagant exaltation of episcopacy, which to modern ears sounds unpractical, unscriptural, and

irrational. In these short seven letters the bishop is mentioned fifty times. We read with amazement such expressions as: "He who does anything without the bishop's knowledge serves the devil;" "It is evident that we must look upon the bishop as the Lord Himself;" and "Obedience to the bishop is obedience to God."

Now it is a perilous and distinct misuse of the Fathers to take such sayings as these, to tear them out of their context, to sever them from their historic circumstances and surroundings, and to treat them as though they meant—or even connoted—what they might mean to modern ears, or had any real authority if they did. Extended into universal propositions, and taken apart from the special conditions under which they were spoken, they would become simply absurd and blasphemous. Even Neander is surprised that the Apostolic martyr should have "nothing more important to dwell upon than such things about bishops."

But besides allowing for the Oriental rhetoric and personal temperament of the writer, and bearing in mind that he is only writing hasty and casual letters, we see, when we look a little closer, that nothing is easier than to mistake the entire bearing of such sentences. Ignatius does not say one word about bishops being either instituted by the Apostles or being successors of the Apostles. His bishop is simply the parochial pastor presiding over his parish council of presbyters as Christ did over his Apostles. Of a diocesan, much less of a monarchical bishop, he knows nothing, but simply of a congregational bishop, regarded as a pledge

of unity, the one safe central authority in these little communities. Since he scarcely ever dissociates the bishop from his council of clergy, and claims equal obedience for both, the early Puritans confidently argued that he favoured the "congregational way." What he yearned for was unity, not episcopal exaltation. Of an irresponsible and independent bishop he knew as little as of an infallible Pope. In his long letter to the Romans, he does not even drop a hint that there is such a thing as a bishop at Rome. His words denote one thing in their real historic meaning, quite another as they are quoted for party purposes. Thus he uses three or four times the word "altar," but so far from even alluding to the Lord's table by that word, he uses it for the court of the congregation. He speaks of "breaking one bread, which is the medicine of immortality;" but the context, as Bishop Lightfoot proves, shows that the "which" refers not to the bread, but to the Christian unity symbolised by the love-feast which still formed part of the Eucharist. Sacerdotal senses are constantly read into Ignatius, but Bishop Lightfoot, who had devoted years of his life to the study of these short epistles, pronounces with emphatic clearness that "there is not throughout them the slightest tinge of sacerdotal language in reference to the Christian ministry."

The other element which surprises us most is the inordinately passionate enthusiasm for martyrdom. It is not a calmly courageous resolve only, but an excited longing. A fire of sombre passion burns

through his letter to the Romans, and its one passionate entreaty is that the Christians at Rome will not intercede for him, will not exert their influence in his favour, will not interfere with the intensity of his eagerness to die. He vehemently urges them not to thwart his great opportunity. "For," he says, "if ye be silent and leave me alone, I am a word of God; but if ye desire to spare my flesh, I shall be again a mere cry. I exhort you, be ye not an unseasonable kindness to me. Let me be given to wild beasts, for through them I can attain unto God. I am God's wheat, and I am ground by the teeth of wild beasts that I may be found pure bread. Rather entice the wild beasts that they may become my sepulchre. Do not abet Satan against me. I write to you in the midst of life, yet lusting after death." You will see at once that all this impassioned cry for martyrdom is quite new to Christianity. It contrasts unfavourably with the more sober dignity and self-controlled moderation of St. Paul: "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. Yet to abide in the flesh is more needful for your sake." We honour the holy Syrian, but neither sainthood nor martyrdom raised him to the spiritual illumination which was granted to the great Apostle of the Gentiles. The calm sense of the Christian Church found it necessary in after days to check and reprove that unwholesome yearning for martyrdom, and that superstitious estimate of its efficacy, which, in feeble natures, became unbridled egotism, and was scarcely distinguishable from wilful suicide.

Of the other holy martyr of the Apostolic age, St. Polycarp, there is less to say. Apart from masses of legend, we know absolutely nothing of him except that in early manhood he had been a hearer of St. John; that he met Ignatius on his way to martyrdom, and received from him a letter of advice; that he visited Anicetus, Bishop of Rome, and amicably agreed with him to differ about the time of keeping Easter; and that he was martyred by fire. The story of his end is full of consummate beauty and interest. We can trace with ease that the semi-miraculous tinge given to it was simply a slight mirage of events perfectly natural, due to the exultation of feeling with which they were described. He is said to have written many letters; but one only, a brief letter to the Philippians, is extant. It is of scarcely any importance. It praises their Church; rejoices in the kindness they had shown to Ignatius; warns them strongly against avarice; deplores the sin of Valens, a presbyter who had been guilty of fraud; and is otherwise made up of simple, moral, and spiritual exhortations. It shows us how very much mistaken we may be when we take the isolated facts and phrases of one writer as exclusive characteristics of the whole Church, for the whole tone of Polycarp's casual letter is strikingly unlike that of Ignatius. The one constantly insists on the duty of obedience to bishops; the other does not allude to his own episcopal rank, does not so much as hint that there is any bishop at Philippi, and does not even mention any bishop at all. He writes, it has

been said, about presbyters and deacons in such a way that he has himself been taken for a Presbyterian. Nor does he once allude to the Church as a whole; nor does he insist on its unity; nor does he make a single Eucharistic allusion.

On the other hand, while Ignatius rarely quotes, Polycarp's letter is mainly a mosaic of New Testament phrases, and hardly rises above the most ordinary level of colourless exhortation. In the case of Polycarp, as in that of Ignatius, we see the beautiful, the undaunted, the holy souls which Christ produces in them who truly love Him; but we see also that we have not to do with perfectness or with infallible wisdom. Thus we find in Polycarp a zeal which comes perilously near to bigotry and to intolerance. We are told two stories about him: one, that when he met Marcion, a heretic in some points, but a man of blameless life, Polycarp ignored him—as we should say in modern phrase, "cut him dead." "Do you not recognise me?" asked Marcion. "Yes," said Polycarp passionately, "I recognise the first-born of Satan." And Irenæus says that if he had heard the novel, but apparently not very dangerous, teaching of Florinus, he would have cried out and stopped his ears, and would have said, after his wont, "O good God, for what times then hast Thou kept me that I should hear such things?" Such was not the tone and bearing of the Lord Jesus Christ, nor of His Apostle St. Paul, towards sinners and heretics of far deeper dye than either Marcion or Florinus. They bear no resemblance

to "speaking the truth in love;" they are an example to avoid, and not to follow; though alas! in all ecclesiastical controversy, from the first down to the nineteenth century, they have been followed and not avoided. Polycarp has been called an ultra-conservative, and it has been said that every new idea put him beside himself; but his unoriginal receptivity had a providential end. It has helped to preserve for us, unimpaired by any refraction of his own individuality, the heritage of Christian truth which he had received as a young man from the disciple whom Jesus loved.

Dry as this glance at the two martyrs has necessarily been, it has brought before us principles which are both valuable and essential, and which apply throughout to the study of the Fathers.

Suffer me to conclude with one or two general remarks.

1. Notice first the immeasurable superiority of the New Testament writings over any and all that follow them. Take the earliest Christian literature: the Epistle of Clement of Rome is almost entirely made up of second-hand phrases; the Epistle of Barnabas is unsound and artificial; and the Shepherd of Hermes is not free from dubious theology. The style of Ignatius is unrestrained, his images fantastic, his tone exaggerated. It has been said that the New Testament is "not like a city of modern Europe, which subsides through suburban gardens, and groves, and mansions into the open country around, but like an Eastern city in the desert, from which the traveller passes

by a single step into a barren waste." Early Christian literature cannot indeed be called "a barren waste," for it is full of faith and love; but is there no evidential force in the fact that it is so immeasurably and incalculably inferior to the words of the fishermen and tax-gatherers who, though unlearned and ignorant men, had felt on their foreheads the glow of the Pentecostal flame?

2. Yet notice, secondly, that with this immeasurable inferiority to the New Testament writings, the works of the early Christians still remain superior to the writings of Pagans. Not, of course, in genius or intellectual force. In wit, in beauty, in poetry, in eloquence, in literary finish, in general ability, the literature of the early Church stands for the most part conspicuously below the heathen literature of the Empire. Yes, but in moral tone the compensating superiority is beyond all expression; and in the humblest Christian writings there are sentences enshrining truths which affect the soul of man for time and eternity, such as could not be gathered from the whole splendid range of heathen literature, even in its palmiest and most golden days.

3. But with all this intellectual inferiority, how was it that they won a victory so amazing and so stupendous over the force, the fury, and the fascination of the world? Listen to what the Pagans said of them. "They are," said Celsus, "weavers, shoemakers, fullers, illiterate clowns;" "Fools, low-born fellows;" "The lowest dregs of the people;" "They have left their tongs, anvils, and mallets to preach about the

things of heaven." "They deceive women and slaves," said other writers. Their religion is described as a joke, a madness, an infatuation, an absurdity, a fanaticism, by the heathen historians, poets, philosophers, and satirists in chorus. Yet, "hunted into the Catacombs, they sprang into the throne." "We are of yesterday," said Tertullian, "and we have filled the world." Why? How did these fools and fanatics, as they were called, with their abject worship of a crucified malefactor, triumph so absolutely, and in so brief a space, over hatred so deadly, over opposition so internecine, over law and loyalty, and the wild beasts and the stake, and frightful calumnies, and the diadems of the Cæsars, and the swords of thirty legions? I answer, very briefly, that they triumphed by virtue of three things, each the gift of the risen Lord—by gladness, by innocence, by fearless martyrdom.

i. They triumphed by martyrdom. When the pagans witnessed the willing deaths of Polycarp, the aged Bishop; of Blandina, the girl-slave; of Potamiæna, the fair young virgin; of Felicitas, the delicate mother; of Laurence, the youthful deacon; of boys of fifteen like Ponticus; of tender little lads like Barulas and Numidianus—they witnessed the divine faith which rendered irresistible the might of weakness. "Come fire and iron," wrote Ignatius, "grapplings with wild beasts, cuttings and manglings, the wrenching of my bones, the hacking of my limbs, the crushings of my whole body; come cruel tortures of the devil to assail me—only be it mine to attain to Jesus Christ."

"Whence came this tremendous spirit," asks Cardinal Newman, "scaring, nay, offending the fastidious criticism of our delicate days? The martyrs shrank from suffering like other men, but such natural shrinking was incommensurable with apostasy. No intensity of torture had any means of affecting a mental conviction. The sovereign thought in which they had lived was their sovereign support and consolation in death; and when Rome at last found that she had to deal with a host of Scaevolas, this proudest of earthly sovereignties, arrayed in the completeness of her material resources, humbled herself before a power which was founded on a mere sense of the unseen."

ii. And they triumphed by gladness. I cannot dwell on this; but joy in sorrow is the unique glory and divine paradox of Christianity. When St. Paul in his first Epistle wrote, "In much affliction with joy of the Holy Ghost," he wrote of a new power in the world. Read the poems of Ovid in his exile; read the letters of Cicero or of Seneca in theirs; then read the letter which St. Paul wrote to the Philippians from his gloomy prison and abounding anguish, and contrast the hopeless, pusillanimous wailing of the Pagan poet and the wealthy philosophers with St. Paul's jubilant cry, which he fears will even weary his converts by its reiteration, "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say rejoice." Compare the Rome of gilded palaces, where men clutched at the possibility of suicide as the main resource and hope in life, with the bright, gleeful faces and sunny emblems of inex-

tinguishable happiness scrawled on the damp galleries of the Catacombs. Compare the agony and defiance of Pagan epitaphs with the Christian's glad cry over his dead wife, "*Terentiana lives!*" or, "Agape, thou shalt live for ever!" Compare the hopelessness of the bereaved Pagan's "Our hope was in our boy; now all is ashes and lamentation," with the Christian's "Marcus, innocent boy, thou art now among the innocent." The world came round to the faith which uplifted it into eternal hope from the foul gloom of despairing guilt.

iii. Lastly, and most of all, Christianity triumphed by innocence. Tertullian gave in one sentence the main secret of the victory of the faith of Christ as we watch it in the history and literature of the first three centuries, when he wrote, in fearless challenge to the heathen world, "We alone are innocent." Love is the fruit, and love is the test, of true Christianity. Organisation without love, party zeal without love, great pretensions and assertions without love, real privileges without love, elaborate orthodoxy and ceremonial scrupulosity without love, are but sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. But where love is, there Christ is; where Christ is, there the Church is; and though a Church where love is, and where Christ is, may be harassed by a thousand calumnies, and excommunicated from a thousand pulpits, there Christ is, and in all such Churches He will abide for ever and for evermore.

The Apology of Aristides.

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THE APOLOGY OF ARISTIDES.

THE fall of Athens from her political independence closed the most brilliant epoch of literary inventiveness that the world has ever known. But her Macedonian victors, under the great Alexander, carried the fame and the intellectual treasures of the little Greek state over the whole of the East; and when they in their turn succumbed before the might of Rome, Greek letters passed into the city of the conquerors, and so mastered the world. The Greek poets and the Greek orators made their influence felt on the Roman stage and at the Roman bar. It became the fashion for rich Romans to have Greek slaves copying manuscripts in their libraries, and Greek philosophers and schoolmasters found their way to the all-welcoming city on the Tiber.

A striking proof of the presence of Greeks and of the prevalence of the Greek language in Rome in the first centuries of our era, is found in the earliest Christian literature. St. Paul can write to the Roman Christians in Greek; St. Clement, the early Bishop of Rome, writes in Greek to compose the troubles of the Church of Corinth; Hermas, probably at one time a

Greek slave, writes his "Shepherd" at Rome and for the Roman Church in Greek; and Justin, the Philosopher and Martyr, of Syrian extraction, has made his way to Rome, and presents a Greek Apology for the Christians to the Roman Emperor Antoninus Pius as late as the middle of the second century.

In religion, as well as in philosophy and poetry, Pagan Rome was looking towards Greece during the same period. Nowhere else had the stories of the gods been told in such wondrous verse; nowhere else had their forms been conceived and enshrined in such glorious marbles. And if the Greeks were ceasing to believe in their divinities, and trying to find philosophical explanations which might still justify them in maintaining the ritual of their ancestral worship, Rome was suffering from the same decay of the ancient faith, and was ready for any lesson whereby scepticism could find a plausible reconciliation with the requirements of a state religion. It was welcome news to be told that under all the apparent discords of gods and goddesses there lay but a single Divine nature after all, manifesting itself in divers forms; or, again, that the histories of the gods were sacred myths and allegories, of which the wise might grasp the spiritual and eternal significance, while the common herd were wallowing in the sensuality of their earthly literal meaning.

Hadrian, the Roman Emperor, well known as a *connoisseur* of antiquities of all kinds, and a keen investigator of religious manners and customs, spent the winter of 125 A.D. at Athens, and even went so far

as to be initiated into the Eleusinian mysteries, one of the last refuges of the religious instinct of Paganism. During this visit to the city, which still retained its character for inquiring into every novelty and being at the very forefront of all knowledge or speculation about knowledge, he received, Eusebius tells us, an Apology for Christianity from an Athenian philosopher named Aristides.

Aristides was one of those who, like Justin a few years later in Rome, had not felt it necessary to throw off the philosopher's cloak on his conversion to Christianity. Nay, he had found the true philosophy—the truth which other philosophers were only seeking. Now he would seize the rare opportunity of presenting it as such to the inquiring master of the world. There was no persecution raging at the time—this motive was not present to draw forth from him, as from Justin afterwards, an Apology pleading for justice to the oppressed. Rather an occasion had been given him to set forth a Discourse "concerning the worship of God;" to enter upon a comparative study of the religions which then claimed the homage of man, and to demonstrate that Christianity, the newest of them all, was superior to them all.

This is all that the history of the Church has preserved to us of the life of Aristides. The story of his martyrdom, which gained him the title of Saint and a place (which he well deserves at any rate) in the Calendar, may or may not be true. Of his writing every trace had vanished. Eusebius himself seems to

have known of it only by report. Not until the last few years—these years which have been so wealthy in recoveries, which have given to the student of classical literature the Constitution of Athens and the Mimes of Herondas, and to the student of Christian literature the Teaching of the Apostles and just at this moment the Gospel and Revelation of Peter—not until now has it returned to us out of a forgotten past, in scraps and translations first, and then in its own Greek dress, to take its place as the earliest formal exposition of the pre-eminence of the Christian faith over all the religions of the world.

The story of its discovery has been fully told elsewhere,[1] and must not detain us more than a moment now. In 1878 a mere fragment from its beginning was published from an Armenian manuscript by the Mechitarist fathers of St. Lazaro at Venice. It bore as its title, "To the Emperor Hadrianus Cæsar from Aristides a philosopher of Athens." Then in 1889 Professor Rendel Harris, to whom all students of Patristic literature, and especially the younger school at Cambridge, owe so deep a debt, discovered the whole apology in a Syriac translation in the monastery of Mount Sinai. As his edition was passing through the press in 1890, it was seen that all the while the Apology of Aristides was in print already in the Greek, embedded without name and beyond all possibility of independent recognition in a religious novel written about the

[1] See "Texts and Studies," vol. i. no. 1 (Cambridge University Press).

sixth century and entitled "The Life of Barlaam and Josaphat."

How far the learned monk, who has earned our somewhat tardy gratitude by preserving to us in its original language one of the earliest of Christian writings, was true to the author whose work he borrowed without acknowledgment and made his own, or how far he altered it to make it more appropriate to its place in his story, is a question for critics who can compare it with the Syriac and Armenian versions. Here I can only give you the main results of a careful study, aided by what others have already written on the subject. But in truth the discovery is still too recent for decided judgments on several of the difficulties which the problem involves. This, at any rate, may be said in favour of our monk's fidelity. At a very early point in his book he shows traces of familiarity with the Apology; he even incorporates a few sentences of it: so that we may well believe that he framed his plot from the outset with a view of embodying it as far as possible without any serious change.

One preliminary difficulty I must ask you to face with me. It started up the moment that the Syriac version was discovered. For that version begins as follows: "The Apology which Aristides the Philosopher made before Hadrian the King concerning the worship of God." This is the general title or heading of the book. It corresponds in its statements both to the Armenian version and to the notices of the book in Eusebius. But then follow these words, which strangely

contradict the title: "The Emperor Titus Hadrianus Antoninus Augustus Pius from Marcianus Aristides a philosopher of Athens." That is to say, the Apology is presented not to Hadrian at all, but to his successor Antoninus Pius: and so its date is at once thrown some twenty years later.

An attempt has been made to solve this difficulty by accepting the name of the later Emperor as the true one. He had been adopted in 138 A.D. by his predecessor P. Aelius Hadrianus, a short time before his death, so that according to Roman custom the name of his new father was embodied in his own, which now became T. Aelius Hadrianus Antoninus. It is supposed then that a careless reader of the title supposed that Hadrian was meant. But it is hard to believe that we can account in this way for a mistake in Eusebius, the same mistake in the Armenian version and the same mistake in the first heading of the Syriac version. It is perhaps more probable that the mistake may be a single one, and made in the reverse way. There are many indications that the Syriac translator has filled out and amplified his original. It is possible that, being ignorant of the true distinction between the two Emperors, and being at the same time anxious to give Hadrian his full name, he has erroneously given him that of T. Hadrianus Antoninus, which he may have found on an inscription, or have borrowed from the opening words of the Apology of Justin. Whether the name of Marcianus, with which he has supplied Aristides, rests on any historical foundation or not, we

have no means of deciding. If the Apology were delivered orally in the presence of the Emperor there would be no need for a formal opening sentence.

There are strong reasons of a different kind for supposing that it was to Hadrian that the Apology was presented. Apart from the consideration that Hadrian's character and Hadrian's visit to Athens afforded a peculiar opportunity for such a discourse as this, we shall see as we proceed that the picture of early Christian life which it contains is such as to demand, if possible, the earlier rather than the later date; and the avoidance of any distinct reference to persecution would be strange and difficult if the Apology were delivered during or immediately after the serious persecution in which Publius the Bishop of Athens was martyred, and the whole Athenian Church was well nigh driven to abandon its Christian faith.

But it is time to come to the contents of the book itself. It opens with the statement that the apologist was himself led out of polytheism to the recognition of the one true God, the Creator of all things, by the contemplation of the order and subordination of the natural universe. This personal confession may be compared with the more elaborate account which Justin gives in his "Dialogue with Trypho the Jew" of his search after truth through the various systems of Greek philosophy. He too, independently of Christianity, had reached the position of monotheism. Our philosopher is throughout far simpler than Justin, but

his opening words are a fit introduction to his theme, and they were doubtless calculated to carry with them the approving consent of his royal listener:—

"I, O King," he begins, "by the providence of God came into the world; and having beheld the heaven and the earth and the sea, the sun and moon and all besides, I marvelled at their orderly disposition; and seeing the world and all things in it, that it is moved by compulsion, I understood that He that moveth and governeth it is God. For whatsoever moveth is stronger than that which is moved, and whatsoever governeth is stronger than that which is governed."

Having briefly spoken of the Divine nature in the terms of Greek philosophy, and somewhat as Philo had done before him, Aristides proceeds to ask which of the races of men have at all partaken of the truth about God. For the purpose of his inquiry he adopts an obvious threefold division into idolaters, Jews, and Christians. Idolaters, or, as he more gently terms them in addressing the Emperor, "those who worship what among you are said to be gods," he subdivides into the three great world-civilisations—Chaldeans, Greeks, and Egyptians; and the reason of this order becomes clear in the sequel.

What we saw at the outset will explain the omission of the Romans from this list. The religion of the Romans was for all the purposes of his argument identical with that of the Greeks. To describe the Greek religion was practically to describe the Roman in its most advanced and aristocratic form; and

Aristides distinctly selects these three peoples as representative: "These are the leaders and teachers of the rest."

His order is chosen so as to work up to a climax of error and absurdity in heathen worship. The Chaldeans appeal most easily to our indulgence or our sympathy. There is something grand and inspiring after all in the worship of the sun, as he rises day by day to run his giant's course, the source of all earthly light and the symbol of all heavenly illumination, the fructifier of nature and the exhilarator of man.

"Once again thou flamest heavenward, once again we see thee rise.
Every morning is thy birthday gladdening human hearts and eyes.
Every morning here we greet it, bowing lowly down before thee,
Thee the Godlike, thee the changeless, in thine ever-changing skies.

Shadow-maker, shadow-slayer, arrowing light from clime to clime
Hear thy myriad laureates hail thee monarch in their woodland rhyme.
Warble bird, and open flower, and, men, below the dome of azure
Kneel adoring Him the Timeless in the flame that measures Time."[1]

So, too, the glorious and ever-varying moon, and the stars moving in solemn procession across the

[1] Tennyson, "Akbar's Dream."

darkness, so distant, so lonely, so living, so pure—even more than the sunlight these have ever summoned out the highest thoughts of men.

Next come the Greeks, clothing the naked powers of nature in exquisite forms derived from the loveliest human beauty and the most majestic human strength. Zeus, the father of gods and men, with his thunderbolt and his all-potent nod; Apollo, who still almost lives for us in the fairest marble of the world; Pallas Athenè, queen of wisdom, and Aphroditè, queen of beauty and of love. These embodiments of the Divine idea do indeed represent a higher civilisation and perhaps a more humanising religion. And yet we cannot so easily fancy ourselves offering incense before their statues, as prostrating ourselves before the glories of the rising sun, or silently adoring "the assemblage of the nightly stars." And moreover, behind these strong and graceful forms lies a history of quarrelling and tumult, of murders and of profligacy, from which the sun and the stars are pure.

Lastly, the Egyptians are still further from our instinctive sympathies in their more degrading worships of dogs and cats, monkeys and crocodiles. The long centuries of civilisation which look down upon us from their obelisks and pyramids, and their bold speculations as to the future life, have a strange fascination for us as they had for the Greeks themselves long ago. "You Greeks are but children," said the Egyptian priest. But in the grosser aspect of their animal-worship they only move our ridicule

and scorn, and so they fitly form the climax of the folly of idolatry.

This, then, is the path which Aristides follows in his survey of the religions of the world. Each in turn he refutes by the most provokingly simple appeals to common sense. Let us take a few specimens of his method.

"They that suppose the Earth to be a goddess are in error. For we see it insulted and subdued by men, digged and defiled and rendered useless; for if it be baked, it becometh dead; for out of a potsherd groweth nothing: and further, if it be too much rained upon, it is corrupted, both it and its fruits. And it is trodden under foot of men and of the other animals; it is polluted with the blood of the slain, it is digged into, it is filled with corpses, it becomes a receptacle of bodies. Since these things are so, it is not possible that the Earth should be a goddess, but rather a work of God for the use of men."

With the same relentless simplicity of logic he dismisses in turn the Heaven, the Water, the Fire, the Winds.

"And they that suppose the Sun to be a god are in error. For we see it being moved by compulsion, and turned about, and passing from sign to sign, setting and rising, to warm the plants and herbs for the use of men. And moreover it hath part with the rest of the stars, and is far less than the heaven, and suffereth eclipse of its light, and hath no power over itself. Wherefore it is not admitted that the Sun is a god, but rather a work of God."

Presently he turns to the Greeks to see what they think concerning God.

"The Greeks, then, though they are wiser than the Chaldeans, have erred worse than the Chaldeans, in introducing many gods as having come into being, some male and others female, workers of all kinds of passions and all manner of iniquities, and these they have themselves declared to be adulterers and murderers, passionate and jealous and wrathful, murderers of fathers and murderers of brothers, thieves and plunderers, halt and maimed, and wizards and mad. . . . Whence the Greeks, O King, have introduced ridiculous and foolish and impious sayings, calling those gods who are no gods, according to their evil lusts, in order that, having these as advocates of their wickedness, they may commit adultery, and plunder, and kill, and do the worst of deeds."

After this terrible indictment of the morals of the Greek Olympus, he goes on to prove his charge by citing god after god to appear before his stern judgment-bar, and proclaiming the vileness or the folly of their history. Zeus, Hephaestus, Hermes, Asclepius, Ares, Dionysus, Heracles, Apollo, Artemis, Aphrodite, and Adonis—each in turn is examined and dismissed with scorn. Thus, for example:—

"They introduce one Hephaestus (Vulcan) as a god, and say that he is lame, and holdeth hammer and tongs, and worketh in brass to gain his sustenance. Is he then in need? Whereas it is not possible that a god should be lame, or needing anything from men.

"Then they introduce Hermes (Mercury) as a god, being covetous, and a thief, and an extortioner, and a magician. . . . Whereas it is not possible that a god should be such as this. . . .

"And Heracles (Hercules) they introduce, and say that he was drunk, and went mad, and slew his own children, and then was consumed by fire, and died. But how could he be a god, being drunken and a slayer of children, and burned to death? or how shall he help others when he was not able to help himself?

"And Artemis (Diana) they introduce . . . and say that she is a huntress, and carries a bow with a quiver; and that she roams about over the mountains alone with dogs, to hunt the deer and the wild boar. How then shall a woman like this be a god, who is a huntress and roams about with dogs?"

Presently, having fully proved his charges against the Greek deities, and denounced afresh the immoralities to which their worship led, he turns to the Egyptians.

"But the Egyptians, being more worthless and foolish than these, have erred worse than all the nations; for they were not content with the worships of the Chaldeans and Greeks, but introduced moreover as gods even brute beasts of the dry land and of the waters, and plants and herbs."

After an exposure of the helplessness of Isis and Osiris, he returns to their animal worship.

"For some of them worshipped the sheep, and some the goat, and others the calf and the pig; and others

the crow, and the hawk, and the vulture, and the eagle; and others the crocodile; and some the cat and the dog, and the wolf and the ape, and the dragon and the asp; and others the onion and the leek. . . . And the wretched creatures perceive not concerning all these that they are nought. For though they see their gods eaten by others and by men, and burned and slain and rotting, they do not understand concerning them that they are no gods."

We may note throughout the whole of this argument a stern severity, unrelieved by any conscious touch of humour. He is engaged in a real contest; he strikes hard blows, he gives no quarter. He does not see, as Justin saw, and as Clement of Alexandria saw, a striving after the truth, a feeling after God, in the various religions of the world, or even in the great philosophies of Greece. He could never have said with Justin, for example, that Socrates was "a Christian before Christ," nor even have appealed with Tertullian to the witness of "the soul naturally Christian." He was an Iconoclast: he saw the folly and the wickedness into which all these things had plunged the human race; he had no sentiment to bid him spare them for their beauty, or for the very pathos of their failure to satisfy the needs of man. Such men are wanted now and then to break the spell of superstition; they are not among the highest choicest spirits of the race; but God has a work which needs such workmen, and He raises them up to pull down and destroy before they begin to build and to plant.

But let us listen again and hear him, before he leaves his demolition of idolatry, turn and sweep away the fine-spun cobwebs, as he counts them, of the sophistry which would find a deeper meaning in the stories of the gods, and interpret them as myths and allegories of eternal truths. He does not even say, These explanations may be good for philosophers who understand them, but what of the people who are still misled and ruined by these false and hateful superstitions? No, he takes them on their own ground, he attacks the philosophers themselves. Do they say that one nature underlies these diverse forms? Then why does god hate god, or god kill god? Do they say that the histories are mythical? Why, then, the gods themselves are myths, and nothing more.

At this point I must refer to a considerable discrepancy which exists between the Greek and the two versions. The Armenian fragment gives us only the first three or four pages, but that is enough to show us that, although it is evidently a very loose translation, yet in certain important points it agrees with the Syriac as against the Greek. Thus, for example, it has a much fuller description of the being and nature of God at the commencement; and it has a fourfold division of mankind into Barbarians, Greeks, Jews, and Christians. Now, the classification Barbarians and Greeks is familiar to us from the New Testament; and so, too, the classification Jews and Greeks. But the two are never combined, and for the good reason that to a certain extent they overlap. The term

Barbarian was used as the equivalent of Non-Greek, and so the Jews were Barbarians, and as such they are spoken of even by their own historian Josephus, as well as by several Christian writers of the second century. So that the distinction between Jews and Barbarians is not a true one, and we can scarcely attribute it to Aristides.

Again, the classification which I have already given you from the Greek of the Apology—idolaters, Jews and Christians, with the subdivision of idolaters into Chaldeans, Greeks and Egyptians—corresponds exactly to the plan of the book, as we have seen. So that the fourfold division found at the outset in the Armenian and the Syriac is inconsistent with the method which Aristides undoubtedly adopts in the sequel.

Once more, there is no trace to be found in the early Christian literature of this fourfold division, whereas the threefold division is not uncommon, and it was used in an old writing now lost, from which we shall presently show that Aristides has very largely drawn.

As, then, this fourfold division is found in the Armenian, which is not translated from the Syriac as we now have it, we must suppose that the original Greek was worked over and amplified at a later period, and that in this enlarged form it became the parent of our two versions. A close comparison of the three documents renders this view almost certain.

I said that Aristides had made free use of an old writing now lost, and it is necessary that I should here

give you some account of it. You are doubtless aware that the last few weeks have given us back fragments of two ancient books which were in circulation early in the second century under the name of St. Peter—a Gospel and a Revelation. A third book which likewise bore his name still waits to be recovered. It was called "The Preaching of Peter." We know it chiefly by quotations made from it by St. Clement of Alexandria. At one time it seems to have claimed for itself a place in the Canon of Scripture; and it was used in the Sibylline Oracles, by the Gnostic Heracleon and in the Gnostic Acts of Thomas, by the unknown writer of the beautiful Epistle to Diognetus, probably by Justin in his "Dialogue with Trypho the Jew," and possibly also by the heathen Celsus in his attack on Christianity, entitled "The True Word."

From the fragments which survive we can see that it contained (1) a description of the nature of God, followed by (2) a warning not to worship according to the Greeks, with an exposure of various forms of idolatry, (3) a warning not to worship according to the Jews, (4) a description of the Christians as being "a third race," and worshipping God in "a new way" through Christ, (5) a proof of Christianity by means of Jewish prophecy, (6) a promise of forgiveness to Jews and Gentiles who should turn to Christ, because they had sinned "in ignorance" in the former time.

Now, all these points, except the proof from Jewish prophecy, are taken up and worked out by Aristides, with

a frequent use of the actual language of the Preaching of Peter. We shall presently find that this fact is of importance to us in helping us to restore with certainty to Aristides several sentences which are preserved in the Syriac, but not in the Greek, from which they were omitted by the monk who wrote the "Life of Barlaam and Josaphat," as being unnecessary for his purposes.

Indeed this is the case at once as soon as we return to Aristides and listen to him, as, after having disposed of all heathen religions, he proceeds, as the Preaching had done before him, to treat of the religion of the Jews. After a short reference to their descent from Abraham and their sojourn in Egypt, he praises them for their worship of the one God, the Almighty Creator, but he blames them—as the Greek form tells us—for their rejection of Christ. Now, the name of Christ has not hitherto been mentioned, and it is inconceivable that Aristides should suddenly introduce it to the Emperor without a word of explanation. But the Preaching, on the other hand, blames the Jews on the ground of their worship of angels and archangels, and their observance of sabbaths and festivals. And so we know that we are right in restoring some such words as the following from the Syriac version: "For their worship is to angels, and not to God; for they observe sabbaths and new moons, and the unleavened bread and the great fast, and circumcision, and cleanness of meats, which things not even thus have they perfectly observed."

This short dismissal of the Jews leads the apologist on to a description of the Christians. He begins with a recital which in several points recalls what we term the Apostles' Creed, which may in its main outlines have been actually in use as a baptismal confession as early as this.

"Now, the Christians reckon their race from the Lord Jesus Christ, and He is confessed to be the Son of God Most High; having by the Holy Spirit come down from heaven, and having been born of a Hebrew virgin, He took flesh and appeared unto men, to call them back from their error of many gods; and, having completed His wonderful dispensation, He was pierced by the Jews, and after three days He revived and went up into heaven. And the glory of His coming thou canst learn, O King, from that which is called among them the Evangelic Scripture, if thou wilt read it. He had twelve disciples, who, after His ascent into heaven, went forth into the provinces of the world and taught His greatness: whence they who at this day believe their preaching are called Christians."

This is a passage of considerable Christological importance, and it is fortunate for us that in the amplified form of the Apology it was transferred to the beginning of the book, to form part of the preliminary description of the four races according to which mankind was there classified, so that we have the advantage of the additional testimony of the Armenian fragment. This additional evidence is the more valuable, as here, if anywhere, alterations were likely to

be introduced by later writers or translators from a remembrance of the phrases of their own creeds; and as a fact such alterations have crept into all the three documents at this place. The Greek writer of "Barlaam and Josaphat" has brought in the later controversial phrase "without human seed and without corruption," as a comment on the Virgin-birth; the Armenian translator introduces the term "Theotokos" —"God-bearing," or, as the Western Church renders it, "Mother of God," the watchword of the Church against Nestorianism; while the Syriac translator, who is himself a Nestorian, uses his own distinctive phraseology in saying that Christ "clad Himself with flesh." But the combination of the three slightly divergent witnesses gives us back the original words of Aristides as I have read them to you. They all agree in recording the Miraculous Conception, and two out of the three agree in the striking phrase, "He was pierced by the Jews."

We have lately seen a remarkable illustration in the Gospel according to Peter of the practice which was common in the second century of attributing the Crucifixion directly to the Jews, and not to the Romans as in our Four Gospels and our Creeds. The very words, "He was pierced by you," are used by Justin in his "Dialogue with Trypho the Jew;" and he may have read them in our Apology, or perhaps more probably in the Preaching of Peter, which would then have an interesting link of connection with the Petrine Gospel.

After this short introduction Aristides goes on to draw a picture of the Christians in their daily life; and this is perhaps the most interesting part of his book. He writes with the simple enthusiasm of a new convert, as though he had not yet seen the darker side, which, as we know from the candid writers of the New Testament, was present in the primitive Church, even from the earliest times. But if the picture be ideal, it is none the less a challenge to ourselves to-day, and a standard for our own self-measurement.

Here, again, Aristides has used the words of the Preaching of Peter, and probably also of the Teaching of the Apostles in its earliest form. It is only strange that he seems to know so little of the New Testament itself. It is, however, important to observe, that he twice refers the Emperor to the Christian writings, once at the close of this piece and once before where he speaks of the "Evangelic Scripture," or, as we should say, the "Gospel Narrative."

"And these are they who beyond all the nations of the earth have found the truth: for they know God as Creator and Maker of all things, and they worship no other God beside Him; for they have His commandments graven on their hearts, and these they keep in expectation of the world to come. They do not commit adultery, they do not commit fornication, they do not bear false witness, they do not defraud, they do not covet what is another's, they honour father and mother, and they love their neighbours; they judge

righteously; whatsoever they would not should be unto them they do not to another; those who wrong them they exhort, and make them friendly to them; their enemies they are forward to benefit; they are meek and gentle; from all unlawful union and from all uncleanness they restrain themselves; the widow they pass not by, the orphan they do not afflict; he that hath supplieth him that hath not without grudging; if they see a stranger, they bring him under their roof and rejoice over him as over a brother indeed, for they call not one another brethren after the flesh, but after the spirit. They are ready for Christ's sake to give up their own lives; for His commandments they securely keep, living holily and righteously, according as the Lord their God hath commanded them, giving thanks to Him at all hours, over all their food and drink and the rest of their good things.

"Truly, therefore, this is the way of truth, which leadeth them that go thereby to the eternal kingdom, which hath been promised by Christ in the world to come. And that thou mayest know, O King, that not of myself do I say these things, by studying the writings of the Christians thou shalt find that I say nothing beyond the truth; for great and marvellous are the things said and done by the Christians, for they speak not the words of men, but of God. And truly this is a new race, and there is something Divine mingled with it. But the rest of the nations are deceived and deceive one another; for walking in the darkness they strike against one another like drunken men.

"Thus far is my speech which is unto thee, O King. But the Greeks, because they practise foul things, turn the ridicule of their foulness upon the Christians. But the Christians are holy and pious, and the truth is before their eyes, and they are long-suffering, and therefore, knowing their error, they endure when they are buffeted by them; and in their behalf they offer up prayers, that they may turn from their error. And when one of them turns, he is ashamed before the Christians of the deeds that were done by him; and he confesses to God, saying, 'In ignorance I did these things,' and he cleanses his heart, and his sins are forgiven him, because he did them in ignorance in former time, when he was blaspheming the true knowledge of the Christians. And truly blessed is the race of the Christians above all men that are upon the earth.

"Let those cease therefore who speak vain things against the Christians. For it is better for them that they should worship God the Creator and receive into their ears His incorruptible words, in order that they may escape the judgment which is to come by Jesus Christ upon the whole race of men."

With these simple and beautiful words we may fitly close. They represent the truest Apology for Christianity in all ages—the one unanswerable argument of the lives of Christians. According to the force with which this argument is presented by the Church in each period of the world's history, will be the success or the failure of Christianity in the unceasing struggle

with doubt and denial. Unbelievers, it has been said, will not read books in defence of Christianity; but they will read—for they must read—the lives of Christians. And even if they do read and examine the written arguments, yet words are but weak and impotent in comparison of deeds. "What you are," says Emerson, "thunders so loudly, that I cannot hear what you say."

Two lessons stand out clearly for us of to-day as we read the old words of Aristides the philosopher of Athens. One is for the Christian student. He may learn that now as then the comparative study of religions proves Christianity to be supreme and final, because it alone has power to satisfy the needs which all other religions but reveal and deepen. The other is for the Christian man, whether learned or simple. He has it in his power—nay more, the solemn duty lies upon him—to give the highest, most convincing witness of the truth of the religion which he professes, in the quiet, unobtrusive, yet impressive and unquestionable testimony of a Christ-like life. This argument is never out of date. The point of attack in the battle for the Faith is perpetually shifting. The Apologetics of yesterday are not the Apologetics needed for to-day. But while there are human souls that feel their need of something to lift them out of their own failure and sin, so long will they look earnestly to the man whose life proclaims that he has found the secret of living. And, as for ourselves we tremble at the responsibility thus thrown upon us, let us remember,

for our strengthening and reassurance, that we do not stand alone, so that Christianity must stand or fall with us. The witness of individual lives is taken up and fulfilled and glorified in the corporate witness of the Catholic Church—that larger, steadier witness, reaching back into the past and forward into the future, before and after the short span of our momentary testimony, the perpetual embodiment and presentation to the world of the Life of Christ by the power of His Holy Spirit.

The Life and Times of Justin Martyr.

BY THE

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THE LIFE AND TIMES OF JUSTIN MARTYR.

I HAVE to speak to you of Justin Martyr and his times.

The world was changing. The Roman emperors were no longer such as Nero and Domitian. Men thought that a new era had begun with Nerva. Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, whatever were their faults, had at least lifted the imperial purple out of the slough and filth of gross licentiousness; and now Antoninus Pius was on the throne, a man whom the fortune of his position and the amiability of his character enabled to dispense happiness to a larger portion of mankind than has fallen to the lot of any other sovereign. Nor was this all. Antoninus had adopted as his heir Marcus Aurelius, and the world was to witness what would be the effect of a philosopher on the imperial throne. Plato had taught that the one condition of the happiness of a state was that the king should be a philosopher, or that a philosopher should be king. His condition was fulfilled in Marcus Aurelius, and that not in the case of a single city such as Athens, but in an empire which was conterminous with the civilised world. The Roman people, which imitated the morals and manners of the

imperial court, could no longer exhibit the picture of unblushing corruption and vice which Juvenal denounces. If the vice and corruption were there, they had for very shame to hide themselves.

The Roman Church had changed also. Some seventy years ago Christianity had begun in Rome as the religion of a few foreign settlers, Greeks and Orientals, scorned by Romans as a petty Eastern superstition, and employing the Greek language for its services and for the communication of its adherents with each other. It used the Greek language still—Justin's Apologies are Greek; but its reputation was enormously grown. Many Romans had joined the foreign Church, and to the old heathen party it was no longer an object merely of contempt but of fear and of unwilling admiration.

The world under the Antonines, being no longer content to wallow in profligacy, looked out of itself for some guide in and towards higher things than those in which it had been immersed — towards intellectual pursuits, morals, speculation, truth. The grave old Roman religion was gone for ever, swallowed up by the Greek mythology, which had been foisted upon the Romans as though it had been the same as their own; and the now debased Greek religion which they had adopted, served as a means of corrupting their manners and destroying the reverence which had been a national characteristic.

Where were they to find their guide? Three offered themselves, two of them philosophies—the third, a religion. These were Stoicism, Platonism, and

Christianity. Each had its claims for respect, and, as its advocates thought, for supremacy. Stoicism was a very noble protest against the lax Epicureanism of the day. It might lay itself open to the taunts of the satirist by its excesses; but on the whole it was a brave declaration that virtue was to be sought for its own sake, and not for any happiness or pleasure that might ensue from it — a very noble sentiment, infinitely superior to the tenets of the Epicurean school then and of the Utilitarian school now. Stoicism had the advantage, in the later years of Justin Martyr, of having Marcus Aurelius on the throne, who professed Stoicism and added to it, occasionally at least, a tenderness, the want of which is the great defect of Stoicism proper. Stoicism appealed to the manlier instincts of the Roman race, and especially of those members of it who desired to resist and turn back the flood of profligacy which had flowed into Italy from degraded Greece.

Stoicism was not so much theoretical as practical. Platonism, on the contrary, was essentially speculative. Its object was to fix the eye of the soul on Truth. The material world with which we are conversant, it taught, is but a shadow and image of that which lies behind it. Our work is so to educate ourselves that we may be enabled to see right through the world of phenomena to that of realities. A man cannot do this thing at once; his eye must be cleared of films, and he must be able to look steadfastly at a brightness of which the brightness of the sun is only a type. With this end he must occupy himself for years on the abstract

sciences—mathematics, geometry, arithmetic—and at length he will catch a glimpse of real existence—that which *is*—and this reality—that which *is*—is the Good to each man and to the universe, and the Good, in its ultimate analysis, is God.

If Stoicism was, with all its faults—and they are many—a noble straining after a high moral standard in practice, the later Platonism, with all its faults—and they too are many—was a noble endeavour to grasp Truth.

These were the two philosophies that were now contending for the mastery, in common opposition to a base Epicureanism and a baser Materialism. Which should prevail, or should another rival drive both from the field? And if so, why? We may read the answer to this question, not only in the books but in the acts and life of Justin Martyr.

One of his treatises is prefaced by a singularly interesting autobiographical fragment.

Being one of the higher spirits, that desired to live above the world of sense and self-indulgence, he turned his eyes, he tells us, towards philosophy, "which is indeed the greatest of treasures, and the most precious in the sight of God, to whom it alone introduces and unites man, for those are truly holy who have applied their minds to philosophy" (*Dial. Tryph.*).

"With this hope in my heart," he says, "I gave myself first to a Stoic teacher; but when, after staying some time in his school, I got nothing told me about God (for my teacher himself knew nothing, and

professed that such knowledge was unnecessary), I left him."

Here we see the weakness of the Stoical system. Man will not be contented with the lesson, "Do right because it is right"—grand lesson as it is. There is a craving for something more than duty—for knowledge, for love, for God.

From the Stoic he turned to the Peripatetic, that is, to one of the school of Aristotle; but he found his master more interested in his fees than in his philosophy, so he quickly deserted his school.

"But," he continues, "my soul was still bursting with a passionate desire to hear the sweet and excellent secret of philosophy, and so I went to a famous Pythagorean, a man who made much of his wisdom, and as I talked with him, and expressed my desire to become his pupil and follower, he suddenly said, 'No doubt, then, you have already studied music and astronomy and geometry, for you surely do not fancy that you can gaze upon the truths that condition a happy life without having first learnt those lessons which draw the soul round from the things of sense and fit it for the world of spirit, so that it may be able to see the Beautiful and the Good.' When he had spoken much in favour of these sciences, and of the necessity of their attainment, he sent me away, as I confessed my ignorance of them."

Life was not long enough for the course of study demanded of him by his master before venturing to attempt to rise to the knowledge of God. He was

much cast down, but refusing to despair, he turned to the Platonists.

"I devoted all the time I could to a man who had settled in our town, an intelligent man, who was thought highly of by his school. With him, I made rapid advances daily, and I was delighted with the Platonic conception of the Immaterial, and the contemplation of the Ideas gave wings to my mind; and quickly I thought to become wise, and expected that if it were not for my dull sight, I should be looking on God, for this is the object of the Platonic philosophy."

He found here something to excite and to satisfy his intellectual cravings, but his heart was still unmoved—the mind was interested, but the spirit was still left hungry and craving. While he was in this frame of mind, he went to the seashore to be alone with his thoughts, when he became aware that an old man of a pleasant countenance, and of a gentle and dignified mien, was walking a little behind him. He turned round, and the two fell into conversation, which soon turned into a discussion on the benefits of philosophy, and of something that was higher than philosophy. The message that he had longed for and sought so diligently in school after school had come from the lips of the gentle old man, who lifted him above the Stoical doctrine of duty, asked for no fee like the Peripatetic, did not require years to be spent on the abstract sciences like the Pythagorean, and gave to his contemplation and to his affections something more personal than the Ideas of Plato.

—"Pray thou then," were the old man's last words, "that the gate of Light may be opened to you. For these things can only be seen and known by those to whom God and His Christ have given understanding."

Justin tells us that a flame was kindled in his soul, and a passion of love arose in him for the friends of Christ, for theirs was the only sure and worthy philosophy.

By Justin's case, we see how and why it was that Christianity beat its two rivals out of the field. It not only supplied a code of duty with Stoicism; it not merely offered to man a deity who might be intellectually grasped after years of mental toil with the Pythagorean and the Platonist—but it presented a personal God, a loving Father, a Redeemer who could be the highest object of man's highest affections and faculties, who could be loved, honoured, worshipped, adored by His creatures. It was not only a philosophy, but a religion. God was not only the object of speculation, but of love.

The manner in which Justin had been converted to Christianity had its effect on his Christian life. It had not been the horror of sin to which his conscience had suddenly become awakened that had brought him to Christ, but it was the lovableness of God, as revealed by prophet and apostle, and the excellence of Christian doctrines which commended themselves to him for their truth, their beauty, and their tenderness. He did not therefore desert the schools of philosophy. He still wore the cloak of

the philosopher, and was ready in the schools, or wherever men congregated to discuss philosophical systems and to probe the weakness of heathen religions, never shrinking from giving his reasons for the faith that was in him, and bearing his witness to Christ before emperors and kings, even to the death by which he earned the name of Martyr.

The extant works of Justin are two Apologies or defences of Christianity, addressed to Antoninus Pius and Marcus Aurelius, and a Dialogue with the Jew Trypho. These three pieces contain his arguments for Christianity against the heathen and Jewish objections to it. More interesting to us than his direct and aggressive controversy, either with Pagan or Jew, are his statements of Christian doctrine, which necessarily occur in all three of his works. We will now, therefore, turn our attention to (1) the doctrines to which Justin testifies; (2) the ecclesiastical ordinances to which he bears witness; (3) the manner of public worship which he describes. We can have no better evidence of the primitive faith, primitive practice, and primitive devotion—and by "primitive" I mean now the middle of the second century, about a hundred and twenty years after our Lord's ascension into heaven.

1. *The faith.* I may say at once that, judging by his statements and by what he does not state, the faith of Justin Martyr is the same positively and negatively as our own; negatively, as we find in him nothing of mediæval doctrine, positively, because he holds like ourselves the doctrines of the Christian or Catholic

faith. Let us take the Creeds, by which to test him. We find in his writings the doctrines of the Holy Trinity (*Apol.* i. 6, 16), of God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth (ibid. 10, 16), of God the Son, eternally born of the Father (*Apol.* ii. 6; *Dial.* 129), and therefore pre-existent before His birth into the world (*Apol.* i. 83), incarnate in time (ibid. 5, 31; *Apol.* ii. 13), crucified (*Apol.* i. 16), dead and risen again (ibid. 28; *Dial.* 107). There appears even to be an allusion to the descent into hell (*Dial.* 72). He teaches plainly the ascension (*Apol.* i. 60, 61), the session at the right hand, and the future judgment by Christ (ibid. 8, 60; *Dial.* 14). He believes in the Holy Ghost (ibid. 80), who spake by the prophets (ibid. 62, 80), the Holy Catholic Church, in which is found the communion of saints (*Dial.* 11, 119), the forgiveness of sins through Christ (ibid. 44), the resurrection of the body, which he regards as a safeguard and incentive to holy living (*Apol.* i. 25), eternal life and eternal punishment (ibid. 8, 23, 24, 28; *Apol.* ii. 1, 9). In addition, we find him dwelling on human responsibility (*Apol.* i. 36, 54), original sin (ibid. 10), reconciliation by Christ's death (*Dial.* 95), justification by His blood through faith (*Apol.* i. 41), the necessity of piety (ibid. 8, 12, 17), the folly of image-worship (ibid. 9, 28), and of material sacrifices (ibid. 10, 16; *Dial.* 117), the necessity of baptism (*Dial.* 43).

These and many more doctrines he states or alludes to, not as anything peculiar to himself, but as the common property of Christians; while of the mediæval

doctrines which have been summed up in the Creed of Pope Pius IV. and later decrees (which form the peculiar dogmas of the modern Roman Church) there is not the shadow of a shade. The only tenet of Justin's which is not commonly held among us now is that of the millennium, which, however, it is quite open now as then for any one to believe as the most natural explanation of a well-known text, or to interpret the text otherwise, as seems best to his judgment.

2. The ordinances of the Church of which Justin speaks are two, and two only—Baptism and the Supper of the Lord. With regard to the first he naturally speaks of adult baptism, because most of those that were to be baptized were converts, and because he was addressing adults and inviting them to baptism. And this is what he says:—

"As many as are persuaded and believe that the things taught and said by us are true, and moreover take upon themselves to live accordingly, are taught to pray, and ask of God with fasting for forgiveness of their former sins, we praying together and fasting for and with them, and then, and not till then, they are brought to a place of water, and there regenerated after the same manner with ourselves, for they are washed in the name of God the Father and Lord of all, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ; for Christ has said, 'Unless ye are born again ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven.'"[1]

[1] He adds afterwards that baptism was in the name of the Holy Ghost as well as of the Father and the Son (*Apol.* i. 79, 80).

He teaches, therefore, that the necessary conditions previous to adult baptism are conversion, repentance, steadfast purpose to lead a new life, prayer; then follows baptism, with the grace of regeneration and the gift of incorporation in the Christian body.

He proceeds to say that, "after the believer has been baptized, and so incorporated or made one" with Christians, he joins the congregation of brethren in their common prayers, showing thus that Forms of prayer were then in use; "and after this," he continues, "bread and a cup of wine and water are brought to the president, which he takes, and offers up praise and glory to the Father of all things through the name of His Son and the Holy Spirit, and he returns thanks at length for our being vouchsafed these things by Him. When he has concluded the prayers and thanksgiving, all the people present express their assent by saying Amen. This word 'amen' means in Hebrew 'so be it.' The Eucharistical office being thus performed by the president and concluded with the assent of the people, those whom we call deacons distribute to each of those that are present a portion of the Eucharistic bread and wine-and-water, and carry them to those that are absent."

We here see that the Holy Communion is administered to every one present—there is no hearing mass, no non-communicating attendance; that it is administered to all in both kinds– there is no half-communion; that the bread and wine are consecrated by the presiding minister and distributed by the deacons—

there is no lay administration; that fasting is spoken of as the common practice before adult baptism, not before the Holy Communion. We may also note that the wine used was the wine tempered with water which it was customary on ordinary occasions in that country and at that time to drink; the water was not ceremonially mixed with the wine during the rite, but tempered wine, such as would have been used at any table, was brought in. Finally, both the bread and the wine—not the bread only—were carried to any who happened to be absent from sickness or any such cause—a thing totally different in form and purpose from the Reservation of the mediæval Church.

On the whole, we see in this simple ceremony a very close likeness to our method of celebrating the Lord's Supper, while we can discover no traces at all of the conception that Christ is being sacrificed to His Father as a propitiatory offering for quick and dead, or of the ceremonies which that conception naturally introduces, nor of the conception that after consecration the bread has become the very body of the Son of God.

It is true that Justin does not regard the bread and wine as "ordinary food." Nor do we, for it has been set apart as the sign and sacrament of Christ's body broken, and His blood poured forth, and as a means of conveying to the rightly disposed soul the benefits derived from His death. It is true too that Justin teaches that the food blessed by the Word is, "as we are taught" in the Scripture, which he immediately quotes, "the flesh and blood of Jesus who was made

flesh." In the same sense in which the bread and wine given to His Apostles at the Last Supper were called by our Lord His body and blood, in *that* sense Justin, and we with Justin, hold the bread and wine in the Eucharist to be His body and blood; but every well-instructed Churchman knows that that does not mean that any change of substance takes place in the bread or in the wine.

Elsewhere Justin interprets two texts in the Old Testament as alluding to the Holy Eucharist. One of these is Isaiah xxxiii. 15, 16: "He that walketh righteously and speaketh uprightly . . . his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks: his bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure." On this Justin says (*Dial.* 70), "It is plain that this prophecy speaks of the bread which our Christ gave us to do in remembrance of His having taken flesh in behalf of those who believe in Him, for whose sake He also suffered; and of the cup which He directed us to do in remembrance of His blood in the Eucharist." We need not hesitate to say that Justin was mistaken in supposing that there is any reference to the Eucharist here. But that is not the point at present, which is to learn his own teaching on the subject. Two things appear, (1) that he had in view our Lord's own words, or he would not have so used the word "do;"[1] (2) that he regarded the

[1] The word ποιεῖν, like our "do," may be used in almost any sense that the context requires, and so we find it used in the New Testament for "ordain," "go," "commit," "fulfil," "be," "purpose," "appoint," "continue," and in the Old Testament for "dress food," "prepare," "offer." Though it is found about 555 times in the New

bread and the wine to commemorate the incarnation and the death of Christ, which were then recalled to mind.

The other text is the well-known passage in Malachi (i. 10, 11): "I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord of hosts, neither will I accept an offering at your hand. For from the rising of the sun even to the going down of the same My name is great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense is offered unto My name, and a pure offering." Justin's Jewish antagonist had maintained that the prophet's meaning was that the prayers and thanksgivings of the dispersed Jews were acceptable to God, though those of the Jews in Jerusalem were not. Justin answers, "You contend the meaning to be that God does not receive the sacrifices offered in Jerusalem by those who, then living, were called Israelites, but say that the prayers of those of your

Testament, and never in the sense of "offer," a few persons in late years have persistently insisted that that secondary meaning of the word is a sense in which it may be used when the context requires no such meaning, and that it is a sacrificial term, and that it is so used in 1 Cor. xi. 24, and they appeal to Justin as the one authority in antiquity whom they claim to be on their side. If they were right in appealing to him, their argument would still be futile; for, as Dr. Mason, accepting the hypothesis, writes, "All the great Fathers, with the exception of St. Justin Martyr, treat the words as meaning 'perform this action.' Although they certainly see a sacrificial connotation in the words as a whole, they do not give so much as a hint that another rendering of the word 'this' had occurred to them. Such could hardly have been the case if the Evangelists and Apostles had understood the word so differently" ("Faith of the Gospel," p. 328). But in fact Justin seems to use the word ποιεῖν, which he joins with ἀνάμνησις, as an echo of our Lord's words. Τοῦτο ποιεῖτε εἰς τὴν ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν, and therefore to employ it somewhat loosely, as is done in *quasi*-quotations, more especially in the case of words of general import.

nation who were then in the Dispersion were accepted by Him, calling these prayers sacrifices. That prayers indeed and thanksgivings offered by the worthy are the only sacrifices which are perfect and acceptable to God is what I myself also affirm; for these alone the Christians also have been taught to do in remembrance both of their food and drink and in commemoration also of the passion endured by the Son of God. . . . But you (Jews) and your teachers deceive yourselves when you interpret this passage of Scripture of those of your nation, . . . because your people are not found even now from the rising to the setting of the sun, but there are nations in which none of your race have ever dwelt, whilst there is not one nation of men, whether Barbarians or Greeks or howsoever called, whether living in wagons, or having no houses, or dwelling in tents, among whom prayers and thanksgivings are not offered to the Father and Creator of all things through the name of the crucified Jesus" (*Dial.* 117).

In this and a similar passage Justin claims that Malachi's statement or prophecy is true, not of Jews but of Christians, who offer, in the Eucharist, the only perfect sacrifices, that is, prayers and thanksgivings. Whether Justin's exposition of the text of Malachi be right or wrong, we need not determine; but you will notice that in his argument there is a singularly important statement, that the Eucharist is not only a commemoration of Christ's death, but also a feast of thanksgiving to the Creator for His goodness in supplying us with our daily food and drink for the

temporal needs of the body, as well as spiritual food for the needs of the soul. This is an aspect of the Holy Communion much more commonly entertained in the earliest than in the later ages, and one that ought not to be lost sight of.

3. In passing to primitive worship as exhibited in St. Justin, we reach smoother paths and more tranquil places. He lays down the principle which should guide the Christian's devotional life as follows:—

"We worship the Creator of the universe, not with blood, libations, and incense (which we are sufficiently taught He has no need of), but we exalt Him to the best of our power with the reasonable service of prayer and thanksgiving in all the oblations that we make Him, having been instructed that the only service that is worthy of Him is, not to consume by fire the creatures that He has given us for our sustenance, but to apply them to our own use and to the good of those that are in need, and to show our gratitude to Him by offering to Him solemn prayers and hymns in acknowledgment of our creation, preservation, the blessings that we derive from things about us, and from the changes of the seasons, putting up prayers that we may have a resurrection to life incorruptible, through faith in Him" (*Apol.* i. 16).

He enters with some fulness into the form and manner in which the Christians of his day conducted the public worship of God. That we may realise the better what this was, we will suppose ourselves to spend a Sunday with Justin about the year 150.

The particulars of the sketch will be drawn in part from Justin's writings, in part from other sources.

The day began very early—some two or three hours before daylight. The reason of this hour being originally fixed, was the desire of the Christians, when under persecution, to avoid the observation of the heathen. On account of the hour at which it was held, it was called the Ante-lucan or Before-daylight service. It consisted of confession of sins, psalms, hymns, prayers, lessons from Holy Scripture, ending with the 51st Psalm, recited or chanted in common. There was no Holy Communion at this service.

At daybreak the congregation broke up, and its members returned to their homes for refreshment. At nine o'clock they reassembled for the special service of the day, called *Missa*, probably, because all but the communicants were dismissed from it. It was divided into two chief parts, answering to our ante-Communion service and Communion service. The first part consisted of psalms, hymns, lessons from the Old and New Testaments, a sermon or sometimes two sermons, preached, the first by a presbyter, the second by a bishop. Down to this point any heathen listeners might be present, but as soon as the prayers began, the heathen were excluded. The first prayers were for the catechumens, that is, for those who were preparing for baptism, and when they were ended, the catechumens were dismissed. Prayers were then offered for the possessed, after which they were

dismissed, and then the candidates for immediate baptism and the penitents were treated in like manner, both classes being dismissed before the Communion Service proper. Then began the Missa or Service of the Faithful, so called, because it was confined to communicants; and all the faithful, that is, all full Christians, were expected to be communicants. This second part of the service commenced with a sort of litany, and then came the offertory, made by the people, not at first in money, but in kind, and consisting chiefly of bread and wine. From these oblations of the people were taken the bread and wine for consecration. These were brought by the deacon to the bishop to be consecrated by him in a prayer containing the recitation of the scriptural words of institution and invocation of the Holy Ghost. All the congregation present then communicated in both kinds, receiving the bread and the cup in their hands from the clergy, who used a particular form of words to each communicant as they offered him the elements. After the reception came further prayers, hymns, and thanksgivings, at the end of which the bishop's blessing was given, and the congregation was dissolved.

But though the congregation was dissolved, its members did not yet leave for their homes. We see from the Epistle to the Corinthians, that in the Apostolic age the Holy Communion and the Christians' Love-feast were celebrated together. The first change in this practice was the deferring the Love-

feast till the end of the religious service, after the conclusion of which it was held in the church. St. Chrysostom, describing the early practice, which had been altered in his day, says, "All the faithful, at their meeting, when they had heard the sermon and the prayers, and had received the communion, on the congregation breaking up, did not immediately go to their homes, but the wealthy and better-to-do members having brought food and eatables from their houses, invited the poor, and made common tables, common dinners, common banquets in the church itself — and after this they went home" (*Hom.* xxii. 3). St. Jerome, giving an account of the practice, says that the common meal was made off those of the oblations which had not been used for communion (On 1 Cor. xi.). From Justin's account, we gather that the presiding bishop or presbyter reserved some part for "the orphans and widows, and such as through sickness or any other cause are in want, and those in bonds, and strangers from afar, and, in a word, all that are in need."

During St. Justin's life, this seems to have been the time and place of the Love-feast, but very soon the time was changed, and it was held in the evening instead of after the morning service. Fifty years later, Tertullian describes it as an evening meal or supper, where, he says, "we satisfy our appetites as men who remember that they have to worship God by night, as well as by day; we talk as men who know that the Lord hears us." After the supper,

he says that they sometimes chanted the Psalms of David, sometimes sang original hymns. "Prayer," he continues, "concludes the feast as well as opens it; then we go away as men who have not so much supped as been to a school of philosophy" (*Apol.* xxxix.).

The full service, followed by the Love-feast, as in the time of Justin, must have occupied some four hours, and beginning at nine would end at about one, when the congregation returned to their homes to rest till six o'clock.

At that hour came the evening service, similar in character to the first (or ante-lucan) morning service, but shorter, consisting of psalms suitable for the evening, prayers, and an evening hymn. It might have lasted about an hour.

During Justin's time then Christians seem to have spent some six hours on the Sunday in public worship, which consisted of an early morning service, a Holy Communion service,[1] and an evening service. Besides, one hour was devoted to a dinner given to the poor by their richer brethren. The three services of the primitive Church were similar in form to our own three services—matins, the Holy Communion, and evensong. The hour at which the first two were held was earlier than our own, as we should expect in a country lying more to the east, and with a climate of a higher temperature than ours; and the time occupied by them

[1] In the early part of Justin's life it is possible that these two services, the ante-lucan and the nine o'clock services, were combined.

was longer than our own, but not more so than might be expected from the zeal of a young and persecuted sect.

It was the constancy of the Christians under persecution which, we learn from Justin, first turned his mind seriously towards Christianity. Every Christian lived, and knew that he lived, in the second century with his life in his hand. It might have been expected that such a man as Justin, neither bishop nor priest nor bigot, but a philosopher after his conversion as he was before, would have had a peaceful end in the reign of the philosophic emperor Marcus Aurelius. It is startling to find the imperial Stoic classed with Nero as one of the persecutors. Under him there died for their faith Justin at Rome, perhaps Polycarp at Smyrna, and a number of martyrs at Lyons. Hadrian, an unembittered sceptic; Antoninus, a genial good-tempered man, had been willing to let the penal code sleep. Perhaps it was his very philosophy, or rather his prejudice as a Stoical philosopher, that made Marcus Aurelius unsheath the sword. He may have seen that the future was either for Stoicism or for Platonism or for Christianity; and while he respected Platonism as an honourable rival, he looked askance at Christianity, because it was a religion instead of a mere philosophy, and he despised it with a Roman's pride as a product of the East. He might have been not unwilling to back up philosophic argument by imperial force.

Whatever was the reason, under him Justin suffered.

The tradition of the next generation related that he was brought before the prefect Rusticus with six of his disciples. The prefect spoke to each in turn, and found that all remained firm in their profession of faith. "Unless you obey my commands," said Rusticus, "you shall suffer tortures without mercy." "What we most desire," replied Justin, "is to suffer for our Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and to be saved; then we shall have security and confidence before that terrible tribunal of the same, our Lord and Saviour, at which the whole world must by God's command attend." All the rest joined their words to Justin's, adding that they were Christians, and that they would not sacrifice to idols. "Hearing this, the prefect delivered judgment, 'As they have refused to sacrifice to the gods and to obey the emperor's edict, let them be scourged and beheaded, as the laws order.' And so the holy martyrs were led to the place of execution, praising God as they went along, and by confession of their Saviour consummated their martyrdom. Afterwards some of the believers, unnoticed, took up their bodies and laid them in a suitable place" (*Ruinart Acta Martyrum sincera*).

Others beside Justin have died for Christ without having the special name of martyr applied to them. Why did a Christian instinct attach it specially to Justin? I suppose not merely to distinguish him from other Justins, but because he so manfully bore his witness, not only in his death but in his life, before emperors and Cæsars and the wise of this world. He was an

apologist, but something more than an apologist—a martyr.[1]

In each age the Church has its special witness to bear. Our own generation and its needs are in some respects not unlike Justin's. Like his, it is not a gross and coarse age; like his, it is respectable, refined, scientific, sceptical. Justin bore his testimony against the adequacy of the philosophic systems of the day, not by denouncing philosophy—he wore the philosopher's cloak to the last—but by showing that the great heart of mankind could not be satisfied by Stoical apathy, or by Platonic abstractions. Has not the Church of this age to bear a somewhat similar testimony? Are there not scientific systems which look with Aurelius' lofty contempt on Christianity, because it is a religion instead of a philosophy or a science? And is it not our task, while acknowledging and rejoicing in the grand triumphs of modern science, to convince men that these things must not be substituted for religion—that though the steam-engine and electricity are great, life and death are greater?

One more short lesson from Justin's writings, which may be derived also from the writings of the other early Fathers. Let us note that his faith is pure, simple, scriptural, and let us humbly thank God that our reformers of the sixteenth century recovered for us out of the accretions of mediævalism the faith in which primitive Christians lived and died.

[1] The title may have been attached to him to distinguish him from Justin the historian and Justin the Gnostic.

And do not let our thankfulness stop there. We have to be thankful for our reformers; we have also to be thankful for the early Fathers. Where else can we find such a touchstone of sound doctrine? You will say, We have the Holy Scriptures. Yes! thank God, we have! Let us guard them well—there is need, there is great need! And we have the testimony of the Fathers to their final and absolute authority, when once their sense has been reached. Such is the plain teaching of Justin (*Dial.* 3, 65), of Irenæus (*Adv. Hær.* iii. 1), of Origen (In *Ex.* xiii. 2), of Cyprian (*Epp.* 63, 74), of Athanasius (*Cont. Apoll.* i. 8, 9), of Basil (*Serm. de Fide*, i.), of Ambrose (in Ps. cxviii.), of Augustine (in Ps. lvii. 4), of Chrysostom (in Ps. v. 1). But suppose that two controversialists, holding diametrically opposite opinions, both claim that Scripture is on their side. What then? Surely the historical testimony of the Church on one side or the other ought to have great weight, and more particularly of the primitive Church, which was nearer Apostolic sources, and had not yet become corrupted by novel accretions. And where is this testimony to be found save in the records of Councils and the writings of the early Fathers? But it will be said, Ah, but they differ among themselves. Well, if they differ, it shows that on the points in which they differ there was no definite line of interpretation adopted by the Church, and we may differ too; but if there be a consent, then surely it would be presumptuous to disregard it. For example, the Church of Rome says, "I find the doctrine of Transubstantia-

tion in Matt. xxvi. 26, of Papal Supremacy in Matt. xvi. 18, of Purgatory in 1 Cor. iii. 13, of Indulgences in 2 Cor. ii. 10." Doubtless we can say, "I don't find them there." But we want more than that, and we have more, if we can say, The Fathers saw no such meanings in those texts—in fact, Transubstantiation was not known, either name or thing, for a thousand years; for a thousand years Papal Supremacy is refuted by the history of the Church, Purgatory was not heard of till the seventh nor Indulgences till the eleventh century. Those doctrines must have arisen earlier had those texts borne, in the mind of the early Church, the sense of late attributed to them. The tenets therefore in defence of which they are now quoted are wanting in scriptural foundation, however much they may claim it. At any rate, the question is no longer whether one man's judgment is likely to be better than another's, but whether an opinion supported, negatively or positively, by the testimony borne in the unchanging records of the primitive Church, is more or less likely to be correct than one that lacks that support and substitutes for it the varying authority of a part of the modern Church.

Let us end by a thought of a different character. Justin is not only an early father; he is also, as his name declares, a martyr. The martyr's voice never dies. From the scaffold of shame, from the bed of fire, from the amphitheatre of wild beasts, across the ages it comes down to us. Whether the martyr died in the heathen persecutions of the first three centuries, or at the hands

of Mohammedan conquerors, or in the fires of the Inquisition and Smithfield, we see his eye fixed upon us, and he asks us a question and he sets us an example and gives us a precept. His question is, "How are *you* bearing witness for Christ? What is it in which He is demanding that *you* should confess Him? What is the tendency of the age which *you* are resisting at whatever cost to yourself? What are the seductions to which *you* are yielding?" "I might have saved my life," he seems to say to us, "by tossing a few grains of incense into the fire, by compromising my faith; but by the grace of God I have resisted even unto blood." There is his example—and his precept is, "Whatever your trial may be, bear it bravely; refuse to yield either to seduction or to force, endure hardship, quit you like a man for the Lord's sake, and in the Lord's cause be strong."

The Life and Times of Irenæus.

BY THE

REV. PREBENDARY STANLEY LEATHES, D.D.

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF IRENÆUS.

IRENÆUS was probably born about or possibly a little before the year 140, and at or in the neighbourhood of Smyrna. As a youth he had seen and listened to the teaching of the aged Polycarp, the disciple of Ignatius, both of whom had been disciples of St. John. He was thus separated, as it were, by only two from the Lord Himself, being in the third generation of discipleship. Notwithstanding this, which is presumably accurate, it is remarkable that we do not know more about him than we do, and that so many points are obscure. For instance, we have no certain information as to the time or place of his birth, nor how it was that he came to be connected with Gaul. All that we do know is, that during the persecution of A.D. 177 he was sufficiently prominent as a presbyter of the Church at Lyons to be sent with a letter from the Gallican confessors to Eleutherus, Bishop of Rome, with reference to the schism of Montanus, and that after the death of Pothinus, Bishop of Lyons, in that year, he was himself elected Bishop in his place. It is equally uncertain how long his episcopate lasted. He is supposed to have died

about the year 202 or 203, but this is on the assumption that he suffered martyrdom, of which there is not sufficient evidence. This is about all that we know of the personal history of Irenæus, and it must be confessed that it is not much.

It will be my object, therefore, in discoursing on the life and times of Irenæus, to endeavour to ascertain what lessons of wisdom and experience we may gather from the history of the period and the part he played in it. Pothinus, whom Irenæus succeeded as Bishop of Lyons, died as a martyr at the age of ninety, in the year 177. He had therefore been a growing boy during the lifetime of St. John, whose death may be placed at about the year 100. Whether or not he had ever seen him we do not know, but as he not improbably was a native of Asia Minor himself, and in that case would have come under the sphere of St. John's influence, we may even imagine that he was able to cherish personal reminiscences of the last of the Apostles. These would naturally be inherited by his successor. And thus we get the continuity of a genuine and unbroken apostolical succession between the younger son of Zebedee, Ignatius, Polycarp, Pothinus, and Irenæus; and indeed there is a double link between the first and the last, St. John and Irenæus, if the possible connection between Pothinus and St. John was a reality. It must be borne in mind that it is not necessary to establish this connection in order to make good the validity of the Christian credentials or their claim on our veneration. Pothinus may never have seen,

still less have known St. John; but the fact that in point of time it is possible for him to have done so, is sufficient to bring home to us the nearness of the times in which he lived to the original sources of the faith and the primary actors in the Gospel history, and that which is a bare possibility in the case of the predecessors of Irenæus was an admitted fact in the case of Polycarp.

The age of Irenæus may be identified with the earliest of those writings, which form so important a part of early Christian literature, namely, the Apologies. These were treatises addressed to the Roman emperors with the view of removing the prejudices against the Christians, and deprecating or diminishing their persecution.

In the present day, those who are reproachfully termed apologists have a difficult and less welcome task imposed upon them, namely, to defend the faith of Christians against the attacks of those who take pleasure in assaulting it on critical, scientific, or historical grounds. The early apologists wrote with their life in their hand; the apologists of to-day write in defence of that which is as dear to them as life. They have therefore so much in common; but the requirements of circumstance have changed the occasion and the purpose of their writing. It is painful to think that after an experience of almost nineteen centuries there should still be those to whom it is requisite to apologise for our most holy faith; but such, alas, is the case. Nor are we quite sure that if all the restraints of morals and enlightenment were withdrawn, as it is difficult to conceive they could be, the

age of persecution would not return. So deep-seated and so intense is the hatred of the natural heart to the truth of God and the operation of His Holy Spirit, that we may well believe it not impossible that under favouring circumstances the rage of persecution might revive. We have but to set in motion certain revolutionary forces with which history has made us familiar, and to direct them by personal or local causes against Christians and the Christian belief, to bring into operation persecuting agencies as severe and terrible as those of the second, the third, or the sixteenth centuries. The progress of enlightenment and civilisation has done much for man, but it is not the whole of humanity which has been leavened thereby, but only certain portions and individuals of the race; and when once the worst passions of the heart get the upper hand, it will matter little whether the interval from the crucifixion of the Son of God is measured by two centuries or by twenty. Politeness is the parent of self-control, and toleration is one of the watchwords of the age; but it needs only a general Election to show how easily men's passions may be stirred to the very depth, and when so stirred it is difficult to say what acts of violence may not be perpetrated if the arm of authority becomes weakened or paralysed. I have little faith in toleration if the name of Christ and His doctrine comes to be felt to be intolerable, or even if one form of belief comes to regard another as essentially anti-Christian. It was the author of Christianity Himself who told us that "the time cometh"—He did not say it was past—"when who-

soever killeth you will think that he doeth a religious service unto God." It is by no means clear that it is impossible for such times to recur; but who is there who would not say, God forbid!

As a specimen of the writings of the apologists I take the following eloquent passage from Melito, who was Bishop of Sardis about the middle of the second century:—

". . . We have made collections from the Law and the Prophets relating to those things which are declared concerning our Lord Jesus Christ, that we might prove to your love that He is the perfect Reason, the Word of God: who was begotten before the Light, who was Creator together with the Father, who was the fashioner of man, who was all things in all, who among the patriarchs was Patriarch, who in the law was Law, among the priests Chief-Priest, among the kings Governor, among the prophets Prophet, among the angels Archangel, and among voices the Word, among spirits the Spirit, in the Father the Son, in God God, King for ever and ever.

"For this is He who was pilot to Noah, who conducted Abraham, who was bound with Isaac, who was in exile with Jacob, who was sold with Joseph, who was captain with Moses, who was divider of the inheritance with Joshua the son of Nun, who foretold his own sufferings in David and the prophets, who was incarnate in the Virgin, who was born at Bethlehem, who was wrapped in swaddling clothes in the manger, who was seen of the shepherds, who was glorified of

the Angels, who was worshipped by the Magi, who was pointed out by John, who gathered together the Apostles, who preached the kingdom, who healed the maimed, who gave light to the blind, who raised the dead, who appeared in the temple, who was not believed on by the people, who was betrayed by Judas, who was laid hold on by the priests, who was condemned by Pilate, who was transfixed in the flesh, who was hanged on the tree, who was buried in the earth, who rose from the dead, who appeared to the Apostles, who ascended into heaven, who sitteth on the right hand of the Father, who is the rest of those that are departed, the recoverer of those that are lost, the light of those that are in darkness, the deliverer of those that are captives, the guide of those that have gone astray, the refuge of the afflicted, the Bridegroom of the Church, the Charioteer of the Cherubim, the Captain of the Angels, God who is of God, the Son who is of the Father, Jesus Christ, the King for ever and ever. Amen."[1]

The name of Irenæus as the peaceable one, or the peacemaker, is best illustrated by the part he took in relation to Victor, Bishop of Rome, in the Quartodeciman controversy. This, like so many other disputes in Church history, was the cause of great and bitter division for several centuries; but as we look back upon it now, it seems difficult to understand how it should have caused

[1] Given in Pitra's *Spicil. Solesm.*, ii. p. lix. *sq.*; and in Cureton's *Spicil. Syr.*, p. 53 *sq.* See also Otto, p. 420. (Lightfoot, "Supernatural Religion," p. 232, *n.* 1.

division, or how the division which it caused should have been so bitter. Some of the Eastern Churches were in the habit of keeping the festival of the Saviour's Passover on the actual day of the Jewish Passover, the fourteenth of the month Nisan, without regard to the day of the week upon which it might happen to fall. For this practice they claimed the authority of St. John. It was, however, not the custom to celebrate it in this manner in the Churches throughout the rest of the world, but only to terminate the Paschal fast on the Sunday following the Jewish Passover. There were synods and convocations held on the matter, and a decree was promulgated that the mystery of our Lord's resurrection should be celebrated on no other day but the Lord's Day, and that on this day alone the Paschal fast was to close. The Churches of Asia, however, headed by Polycrates, Bishop of Ephesus, maintained the opposite view, and expressed it in a letter to Victor, Bishop of Rome. "We therefore," said he, "observe the Passover day, neither adding thereto nor taking therefrom. For in Asia great lights have fallen asleep, who shall rise again in the day of the Lord's appearing, in which He will come with glory from heaven, and will raise up all the saints: Philip, one of the twelve apostles, who sleeps in Hierapolis, and his two aged virgin daughters. His other daughter also, who having lived under the influence of the Holy Ghost, now likewise rests in Ephesus. Moreover, John, who rested on the bosom of the Lord, who also was a priest and bore the sacerdotal plate, both a

martyr and teacher, and is buried in Ephesus; also Polycarp of Smyrna, both bishop and martyr. . . . All these observed the fourteenth day of the Passover according to the gospel, deviating in no respect, but following the rule of faith. Moreover, I, Polycrates, who am the least of all of you, follow the tradition of my relatives. For there were seven of my relatives bishops, and I am the eighth, and my relatives always observed the day when the Jews threw away the leaven. I, therefore, brethren, am now sixty-five years in the Lord, who having conferred with the brethren throughout the world, and having studied the whole of the Sacred Scriptures, am not at all alarmed at those things with which I am threatened, for they who are greater than I have said, 'We ought to obey God rather than men.'" Upon this Victor proceeded to cut off and excommunicate all the Churches of Asia Minor as heterodox about A.D. 190. He, however, was severely censured by many, and more especially by Irenæus, in the name of the Churches of Gaul, who, in addition to other matters, said: "Not only is the dispute respecting the day, but also respecting the manner of fasting. For some think they ought to fast only one day, some two, some more days. Some compute their day as consisting of forty hours, night and day, and this diversity existing among those that observe it is not a matter that has just sprung up in our times, but long ago among those before us, who perhaps not having ruled with sufficient strictness, established the practice that arose from their simplicity and inexperience, and yet with

all these maintained peace, and we have maintained peace with one another; and the very difference in our fasting establishes the unanimity in our faith."[1]

Now many things strike us in this narrative of Eusebius. First, it is interesting to be brought so close as we are here to the Apostles Philip and John. Secondly, the mention of John as resting on the bosom of the Lord can only be derived from the statement about the beloved disciple who is said to have done so in the fourth gospel, in which it is also plain from the last chapter that he was one of the seven at the sea of Tiberias, and the only one of the seven that could have been the writer. Thirdly, the reference to bishops carries us back practically to the first thirty years of the second century, or even earlier. Fourthly, it is evident that the heads of the Church at this time had not learnt from the fourteenth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans to estimate the relative importance of the points in dispute, and consequently that the conduct of Victor shows that even then there was at least one Bishop of Rome who was not infallible. Fifthly, it is also plain that as he was not *ex officio* infallible, so neither was his authority at that time officially recognised as absolute or supreme, for otherwise the Bishop of Lyons would not have confronted him as Paul formerly confronted Peter at Antioch. And lastly, it is pleasant to discover the implied plea for liberty at the close of the epistle sent to Victor, notwithstanding the firm and determined attitude assumed by Polycrates. If all

[1] Eusebius, edit. Crusé, pp. 237, 238.

controversies could be conducted on the lines of mutual forbearance, at least when no principle was involved, it would at all times be better for the peace and welfare of the Church. In the case of the Quartodeciman controversy it is hard to discover any principle that was at stake, or indeed any by which it was governed, though the form it assumed lends itself to the suggestion that it might conceivably have been caused by the comparative importance attached respectively to the Passion and the Resurrection of our Lord as factors in the redemptive scheme. There is indeed, as far as I am aware, no trace of this having been acknowledged as the ultimate efficient cause of the dispute, although it is possible that unconsciously it may have operated in this way. We have long ceased to contend about the keeping of Easter, but it is still sufficiently obvious that different schools of Christian thought regard with preference and predilection the character of our Lord's redemption in its atoning aspect, or in that of the regenerative power of renewal which it has brought in through the new life of His incarnate manhood. The same twofold aspect is conspicuous in the ordained memorial of His death which speaks equally and simultaneously of His sufferings and atonement for sin, and of the new power of endless life with which His resurrection from the dead has quickened us.

I am not aware that there is any evidence of the Quartodeciman controversy having ever been regarded in this way, but it is at all events pos-

sible to look at it in this aspect, and then we can understand the intensity of opposition which it undoubtedly excited. In all such matters of conflicting or opposite opinion the wisest course to adopt is an inclusive one rather than one which is exclusive. The best method is, if possible, to combine both opinions, but this cannot be done if the question is not lifted above its more concrete aspect and character to the purer region of principle. We can discover no principle involved in such a controversy as the Quartodeciman; but had there been any such principle as I have suggested, it is obvious that the truth would have been lost and sacrificed by the controversialist of either side that insisted on his own particular aspect as the only and all-important one to the subordination or exclusion of the other. In ecclesiastical controversies generally it is those who are farthest removed from them who are best able to discover the principle underlying them. At the time when they are fiercest it is commonly some incidental or superficial point at which the difference is emphasised, and the broader issues involved and the deeper motives underlying them are less apparent. It would certainly seem to be so with the controversy about the keeping of Easter which so violently agitated the early Church. It is hard to see that there was any principle involved therein, unless it be the one I have indicated, of which, however, there appears to be no sign. It is, however, fair to remark that Irenæus says in another place: "The apostles have directed us to let no man judge us in

meat or in drink, or in respect of a holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath-days. Why, then, these disputes? Why these divisions? We observe fasts, but it is with the sour leaven of malice and wickedness, for we rend the Church of God; we observe externals, but we omit the weightier matters of faith and love. We learn, however, from the prophets that such feasts and such facts are an abomination to the Lord."[1] These are words worthy of his name as a peacemaker.

In his controversy with the Gnostics, especially the Valentinians, however, it is difficult for the reader to understand the position of the adversary, or to be quite certain that it was understood by Irenæus. Gnosticism was the result of the influence wrought by Christianity upon the speculative tendencies of the Greek mind. The various forms assumed by Gnosticism are inconceivable by us as forms of belief now, and it is these forms that Irenæus and the fathers combated; but the motive principles underlying the forms are by no means defunct. The question of the origin of evil, and how it can co-exist with the will of a good and Almighty God, the way in which the infinite can become finite, the eternal submit to the conditions of the temporal, and the like, are problems that have not yet been solved, and are not likely to be solved. The influence they exert upon ourselves, however, is very different from that which is seen in Gnosticism, but the problems which exerted it are the same in both cases. As long as the mind yields itself to the fasci-

[1] Neander, I. 415; Bohn's edit.: Keble's Irenæus, p. 555.

nation of these problems it cannot be free from the vagaries of speculation. The only attitude of safety is that which is content to bow before them with unfeigned humility, and to say, "*I do not know.*" It is certain that revelation leaves them unsolved, and the only solution proposed by Christ was that which is expressed by "the will of the Father." One thing is absolutely certain, namely, that the human mind is incapable of adequately dealing with these problems, or is deficient in the knowledge requisite for doing so. The dreams and vagaries of Gnosticism were expressive of the revolt of the pride of man against the trammels of his ignorance and imbecility. The spectacle which the controversy presents in the writings of Irenæus is tedious and bewildering. It is not treated philosophically, nor was it so understood any more than the Christian faith itself was philosophically understood, nevertheless there must have been a philosophy of some sort underlying both.

There is a famous saying of Irenæus, "Where the Church is, there also is the Spirit of God; and where the Spirit of God is, there is the Church, and all grace."[1] There is less doubt as to the truth of the second half of this statement, which resembles St. Paul's, "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty," than there is about the first. And it is in the supposition that the one is the correlative of the other that the mistake lies, and it is this mistake which was emphasised rather than detected in the

[1] Keble's Irenæus, p. 303.

after history of the Church. There is a deeply seated impression that the corporate body of the Church in its openly defined limits is not only that to which Christ has promised His protection and His presence, but that to which He has confined and restricted the operation of His grace. The necessary consequence of this position is the corporate unity of the Church; and when that unity is broken, as in fact it is and has been, it becomes absolutely indispensable to decide in what fragment of the broken unity the supposed original promise is enshrined. Hence the discussions which have not ceased to agitate the Church in this country and elsewhere as to the true representative of the undivided Church. But as Neander has shown,[1] this position is that of the Old Testament rather than the New, and even in the Old Testament we see that the schism in the outward organisation of the nation did not hinder the free operation of the Spirit of God in the northern kingdom as evidenced by the ministry of the prophets. Much more, then, in the spirit of the New Testament we may learn that the Church is not a body whose actual limits can be discerned by man, but that as all must be included in those limits upon whom the waters of baptism have passed, so those only are inheritors of the higher privileges of the Church who have the Spirit of Christ, who are known only to God, and that in this sense the words of St. Paul apply: "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His,

[1] I. 290 *sq.*

and Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." This, if any, is surely the lesson which the prolonged history of the Church has taught us. It is a lesson which in the earlier ages of the Church she showed herself singularly incompetent to learn, and it is a lesson which the theory of the Church, as thus expounded by Irenæus, and developed by those who followed him, effectually disqualified her for learning. We in like manner shall be singularly inapt scholars in the school of Christ if we suppose that union with the Church can be achieved by anything but by spiritual communion. Whatever takes the place of this spiritual communion is a delusion and a fraud. Christ is the sole depository and dispenser of His own Spirit, and the one only means by which His Spirit and spiritual gifts can be conveyed and communicated to the individual or the body is personal faith. Irenæus, in common with other writers and actors of his time, such as Origen, Cyprian, and Tertullian, helped to lay broad and deep the foundations of what had already begun to glory in the appellation of the Catholic Church. The conception of the Catholic Church as a compact and solid whole, closely connected and interdependent in all its parts, with clearly distinguishable and distinct limits and well-defined boundaries which all could recognise, was one which took definite shape in the second century, and became more and more fixed and rigid as the ages rolled on. This conception was largely the result of the peculiar and novel position in which the Christian community found itself when confronted

with the forms and forces of Judaism and Paganism—the effect of its inevitable self-contemplation in contrast therewith—and before a wider, larger, and more mature experience had enabled it to estimate the relation of things external to itself more justly and sympathetically. It would be hard to find either in the Epistles of St. Paul or the Revelation of St. John, where we might most naturally expect to do so, anything which can fairly be regarded as the exponent of this conception, though it is possible to detect certain statements and expressions which might easily be distorted into favouring such a conception. The gospel idea of the Church as given by our Lord Himself is that expressed in the words, "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them." This is at once the charter of all Christian worship, and the germ and nucleus of the Christian society. To suppose that that society can have any concrete existence which may legitimately be regarded with complacency and confidence, apart altogether from the spiritual bond of association among its several members in the name and with the Person of Christ its Head, is totally to mistake the teaching and work of Christ. And yet this, with greater or less precision, is the view of the Church which has obtained ever since she learned to pride herself in the name of Catholic, as expressive of something inherently possessed of talismanic virtue. The necessary result of this concentration of the mind and thoughts upon the being and constitution of the Church itself was a natural tendency to substitute this

object for that of its more legitimate contemplation in the Person of Christ. There is nothing more calculated to shock the moral sense of one who implicitly believes in the Church's mission, than the spectacle presented by the arrogant pretensions and the utterly godless and iniquitous character and conduct of the so-called Catholic Church during its long ages of proud presumption and scandalous abuse of its privileges.

To suppose that any individual from merely formal and federal incorporation in such a society as the Church, *e.g.*, of the middle ages, was in virtue of such incorporation morally or spiritually benefited by it, is to mistake altogether the character of that society which Christ founded by the shedding of His blood, and concerning which an apostle wrote, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." And this, be it observed, is said without in any way denying the fact that it may and must have been in and through such a body alone that the knowledge of the facts of the Christian redemption was in many if not in all cases conveyed. The mistake lay in supposing that these facts could operate as moral or spiritual levers without their being known or understood. But, on the supposition, whatever benefit is to be derived from incorporation with the Church is derived solely through participation in her sacraments. That is to say, they cease to be moral and spiritual levers, and become only mechanical agents for creating and maintaining such incorporation. Now it is this mechanical conception of the Church which confronts us all through

the middle ages, and begins to be apparent in writers even from the second century onwards. It is no doubt invidious to criticise the faith and intellectual or doctrinal position of men like Irenæus and others, many of whom endured exquisite torture, and laid down their lives for the sake of Jesus Christ; but still it is not necessary to forego the great advantages we have gained by prolonged Christian experience and the example of past ages in order to do them full justice for their heroism and sublime self-sacrifice. We have abundant cause to be thankful that our lot is cast in days when persecution is almost unknown, and we may well doubt had their lot been ours whether we should have borne it so nobly as they did, still as heirs of all the ages and much richer in Christian experience than they were, we shall fail to derive from their example and history the lesson we may learn unless we endeavour to estimate to the best of our ability the mistakes and defects in their character and conduct no less than their claim on our admiration and esteem. To suppose that a body calling itself the Catholic Church, determined and defined simply by the mark of external baptism, full of defects, inconsistencies, and divisions in itself, can maintain its claim in virtue merely of its outward conformation and constitution to be the sole witness for Christ upon earth in the face of the many millions of human beings throughout the world, and that every individual of that body, in virtue of merely external association with it, is in any respect better than they,

is to be ignorant altogether of the nature of the mission and teaching of Christ. He came as the messenger of God to all mankind alike, proclaiming forgiveness, peace, and holiness to every individual who accepted Him, irrespective of nation, age, or station; and to suggest that the like function has been delegated by Him to a heterogeneous body called the Church, which inherits His authority but not His character, is virtually to dethrone and depose Him, and to put something else in His place. For it is not a mere matter of deputed and entrusted powers of which I speak: no one supposes that Christ does not work by intermediate agencies or that He works otherwise now, but it is another matter altogether when the Catholic Church is substituted for and interposed in the place of Christ, so as to hide Christ and to cause herself to be taken and received in the stead of Christ. This is to put sight in the place of faith, and therefore to quench and stifle that very faculty without which it was declared of Christ Himself that He could do nothing. There can be no question whatever that the Catholic Church has usurped the office and functions of the Divine Master, and so far as she has done so, instead of being a witness to Him has witnessed only to herself and her claims, and the tendency to do this began to manifest itself in the very early ages of her existence. She mistook the nature of her commission, and identified herself with her Master, with the inevitable consequence of diverting men's thoughts and deference to herself rather than directing them to Him. The prin-

ciple underlying the ancient conception of the Catholic Church as a body totally distinct from all others, and possessed exclusively of the truth, is altogether opposed to the popular principles of the present day, which are disposed rather to maintain that the essential difference between right and wrong, truth and falsehood, is a vanishing quantity, and that if a man is sincere in what he believes it matters little what that belief is, and that what is true to the individual is more or less true in itself. The spectacle which the Catholic Church of the early and middle ages presents is that of a body of men professing to have the monopoly of truth, and commissioned on behalf of it to do battle with all opponents. This is the conviction which is the parent of the persecuting spirit, and if the Catholic Church of the early ages suffered in this respect at the hands of ignorant and unsympathetic heathens, she learnt completely to play the same part herself before many centuries were over.

The reality and divinity of the Christian faith is apparent in nothing more than in its power of readjusting and adapting itself to all conditions and forms of thought. It is a plant of that hardy nature that it will grow in any soil: we may

> "Plant successfully sweet Sharon's rose
> On icy plains and in eternal snows."

Each age in succession has made the mistake of confounding some less important point with the indispensable and essential substance of the Christian

faith. In this manner Irenæus was fain to take refuge from Scripture, to which he and his opponents alike appealed in tradition, and then, when they also appealed to tradition, in the rule of faith contained in the baptismal confession of the whole Church. In like manner the mind of Christendom has continually oscillated between allegiance to Scripture and the authority of tradition. The great work of the Reformation was to recall men to an acknowledgment of Scripture as the true and only final appeal in all controversies concerning the faith. But here again the difficulty is felt to arise as to the meaning and interpretation of Scripture, and in the present day the area of doubt is still further enlarged by the discussions and theories as to its origin, its composition, its preservation, and its interpretation, so that many minds are eager to take refuge in the simpler compendium of the apostles' creed as virtually embodying the teaching of Scripture and the select results of tradition.

But in accepting this symbol of the faith as sufficient and final many persons forget how much more they are pledged to by it than at first sight may appear, for unless tradition is more infallible than experience would lead us to suppose, it is clear that the apostles' creed must have some historical and documentary evidence to rest upon. The creed, *e.g.*, presupposes the general trustworthiness of the gospel history, and is therefore itself dependent upon the gospels, and unless the articles of the creed can be substantiated from the gospels its authority for them must be held insufficient.

But more than this, it is plain that the creed commits us to the acknowledgment of certain facts that are in themselves supernatural, and that consequently demand adequate proof, *e.g.*, "The third day He rose again from the dead, He ascended into heaven," and the like. To be sure, we have the authority of the Scriptures for these facts, but whence do the Scriptures derive their authority, for unless they have a supreme authority for what they relate, the mere fact that they relate certain things is of itself inadequate to make those things believed, as is obvious from the unbelief with which in many quarters they are received.

Now, it is very certain that the supernatural facts of the creed are precisely those which must adapt and adjust themselves in relation to the ever-varying character of human thought. The effect of the resurrection on the mind at the present day is very different from the way in which it was regarded say a thousand years ago. Where it is believed in the present day it is recognised in its character as an all-commanding, all-subduing spiritual power. The resurrection in the present day is believed because its transcendent influence is felt, and though we may not say that the men of the ninth and tenth centuries were insensible to this influence, it is pretty certain that the resurrection was accepted as a thing *per se* incredible, and to be believed dogmatically as an article of the faith rather than as a thing which wrought conviction in the mind by its self-evidencing power. In this way it is hardly possible to read the writers of the early Church and not feel that,

however valiant they may have been for the truth, and however determined in their opposition to heresy, it may well be doubted whether their own intelligence of the teaching they maintained was what it might and ought to have been; not that on this account they are to be censured, as it is unfair to look for the intelligence of the man in the child, and their lot was cast in the infancy of the Church, and consequently of the Christian intelligence. To illustrate still further what is meant, it is sufficiently manifest that the best of the theology of the present day is very far in advance of the best of the theology of the eighteenth century; and if this is so, there is no reason why we should credit the early ages of the Church with wisdom and illumination which we have not. If this were so, we should have lived in vain, and the generations before us also would have lived in vain. For we should have learnt nothing from them, and their example would have contributed nothing to our experience.

In studying the characters of early Church history, we are pretty certain to be influenced by our preconceptions with regard to the rule of faith. It is very frequently supposed that the Christian writers of the second century, from the very fact of their greater nearness to the time of our Lord and His apostles, must have been possessed of information and wisdom which we cannot attain to, and that consequently every fragment of their writings must be of inestimable value. When, however, we begin to investigate these writings for ourselves, the result is one of intense disappoint-

ment. So far from their furnishing us with illumination and guidance in the midst of our own perplexities, we find not only that they are far inferior to the writers of the apostolic epistles, but that they abound in puerilities about æons and emanations, which show that they were not only deficient in knowledge themselves, but also that they had failed to estimate truly the wholesome and saving wisdom of the message they had received. For example, we are told by Irenæus that "it is impossible that the Gospels should be in number either more or fewer than four. For since there are four regions of the world wherein we are, and four principal winds, and the Church is as seed sown in the whole earth, and the Gospel is the Church's pillar and ground, and the breath of life: it is natural that it should have four pillars, from all quarters scattering incorruption and kindling men into life. Whereby it is evident that the Artificer of all things, the Word, Who sitteth upon the Cherubims, and keepeth all together, when He was made manifest unto men, gave us His Gospel in four forms, kept together by one spirit. As David imploring His presence sayeth, '*Thou that sittest upon the Cherubims, show Thyself.*' For indeed the Cherubim had four faces, and their faces are images of the dispensation of the Son of God. For *the first living creature*, it saith, was *like a lion*, denoting His real efficiency, His guiding power, His royalty; and *the second like a calf*, signifying His station as a Sacrificer and Priest; and *the third having the face of a man*, most evidently depicting

His Presence as Man; and *the fourth like an eagle in flight*, declaring the gift of the Spirit flying down upon the Church. Now then the Gospels are in unison with these, upon which Christ sitteth. For, first, that according to John relates His princely and efficacious and glorious birth from the Father, saying, '*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God*,' and '*all things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made*.' On this account this Gospel is also full of all confidence; for that is his Character. But the Gospel of Luke, as being of a priestly stamp, began from Zacharias the priest burning incense unto God. For now the fatted Calf was a preparing about to be sacrificed for the finding of the younger Son. Matthew for his part proclaims His Birth as a Man, saying, '*The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham*,' and '*now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise*.' This Gospel therefore is of human form; wherefore also through the whole of it the character is kept up of a lowly-minded and meek Man. And Mark hath made his beginning from the prophetic Spirit which cometh upon men from on high, thus saying, '*The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, as it is written in the Prophet Esaias*,' implying the winged image of the Gospel. 'And for this cause he hath also made his narrative concise and rapid; for this is the stamp of Prophecy.' And again, 'And therefore four general covenants were given unto mankind: the first of Noe's deluge on occasion of the Bow; and the second Abra-

ham's, with the sign of Circumcision; and the third the giving of the Law under Moses; and the fourth that of the Gospels by our Lord Jesus Christ.' Now, such being the case, they are all vain, ignorant, and daring withal which set at nought the true notion of the Gospel, and privily bring in either more or fewer individual Gospels than have been mentioned; the former that they may have the credit of discovering more than the truth, the latter that they may set at nought the dispensations of God."[1]

Now in this passage it is impossible not to perceive a certain amount of childishness in the reasons assigned which cannot but serve as a gauge whereby to measure the advancement and intelligence of the writer, and to mark them out as characteristic of the infancy of the Church; but at the same time the extract has an especial value of its own, inasmuch as here we have at the close of the second century clear and manifest testimony to the existence of the four Gospels as we have them now, and to the fact that the fourth Gospel was already on a level with the other three, which it assuredly would not have been had it only come into existence fifty years before. In point of fact, the witness of Irenæus on this matter is virtually the witness of Polycarp and Ignatius and St. John, for it is not likely that one who so strongly opposed novel substitutes for and additions to the Gospel would have accepted this Gospel had it been novel, or that he could have spoken of it as he has if it had been new. Thus the writings

[1] Keble's Irenæus, p. 235.

of the early fathers are of the highest possible value for the evidence they supply as to the belief and practice of their own time, but are of comparatively small account when appealed to as authoritative on matters of opinion. Indeed, they were themselves defective in that which is an indication of our own weakness now, inasmuch as they were disposed to rest rather upon the authority of tradition than to act on the responsibility of forming their own judgment in reliance on the promise of Christ that He would send the Spirit of truth, who should "guide us into all the truth." The Church has in all ages been slow to apprehend and believe the assurance of the Lord, "Nevertheless I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you."

We are ever on the watch rather for some personal, visible, and definite guidance, whether that of tradition or anything else, than ready or able to guide ourselves in accordance with the principles and in dependence on the Spirit of Christ. As circumstances change, and the world grows in requirement and the multiplicity of incident and complication, we discover more and more the inadequacy of precepts and rules framed under totally different conditions; and the necessity arises for the exercise of judgment formed partly from a comparison of analogous occasions, and partly on the application of eternal principles to the ever-varying circumstances of a progressive and continually de-

veloping age. And this is surely a lesson that is forced upon us as we study the history of the Church in times past, and not the least so in the second century. Every one must feel, as he peruses Irenæus's treatise against all heresies, that there is in it not only a vast amount that is superannuated, useless, and effete, but also that not seldom he has mistaken the relative importance of sundry points, and has failed to see the bearing of great Christian truths, which would have effectually foreclosed the discussion, upon others. He is far from open to reproach on this ground, inasmuch as he is necessarily the exponent of his age, and was hampered by the limitations of his environment just as we are by those of our own; but it will be our own fault if we look to him with implicit faith as a guide, rather than endeavour to learn from his deficiencies, and try to make our own the less by the wise and judicious consideration of his. To complain of the early fathers on this ground would be to complain of their circumstances being different from ours, and of their advantages being less than ours. If the world lasts it may be that our own discussions and controversies may seem as trivial and unimportant a thousand years hence as theirs do now. When that time comes, may the testimony we have borne to Christ be as clear and unfaltering as was theirs, and may our reward be no less certain and glorious than theirs.

There is one point in connection with the rise of the Gnostic heresies which were so marked a feature

of the second century which does not seem to have attracted its due attention, and that is the unexpected and unwilling testimony they unconsciously bore to Christ. The rise of the religion of Christ in the world may not inappropriately be compared to the rise of the natural sun. It is no uncommon thing for a sun that rises in all its glory and splendour to be soon obscured and hidden by a heavy rack of cloud, and subsequently to emerge again with renewed power and brilliancy. It was so with the resurrection of Christ, and its attendant and consequent illumination. Two generations had not passed away before Gnosticism began to erect its hideous and varied front to obscure, confuse, and hide the brightness of the truth of Christ. This doubtless served its purpose in the providence of God, and wrought eventually to the more confirmation of the faith. But it is possible for us now to see that it did even something more. For how was it that the monstrous and distorted conceptions of Gnosticism were so busy as they were with the person and history of Jesus if He was nothing more than an extraordinary man. Plato and Aristotle were very extraordinary men, and originated an influence which we still feel, and which will doubtless be undying. But no Gnostic heresies arose to create a halo of mist around their names when they left the world. Platonism was succeeded indeed by the neo-Platonism of Alexandria, and both entered largely into certain phases of Gnosticism, just as Aristotle largely influenced the schoolmen, but neither Plato nor Aristotle in his own person became

the nucleus of distorted myth and speculation as did Jesus of Nazareth. But the very fact that Jesus of Nazareth, the crucified Carpenter of Galilee, was found in His own person to be an element that could not conveniently be adjusted with a Demiurgus or subsidiary creator, or with the endless genealogies of æons and emanations from the supreme and ultimate Godhead, is most marvellous and unconscious testimony to the exceptional and unique character of His person. Had there not been features in His history which would not adjust themselves to the ordinary or even extraordinary conditions of humanity, it is surely unreasonable to suppose that the speculative vagaries of Gnosticism would have shown themselves so busy with His name. And while each endeavour in turn served only to show the futility and failure of the previous one which gave place to it, no slight testimony was borne to the stability of those facts on which the creed of the Church was built, and which she alone was content to accept in their bare and naked simplicity, while she did not hesitate to confess that the only scheme which was not hopeless was that which was advanced by Jesus Christ Himself, who claimed to be the only begotten Son of the Father, the manifestation in human nature of the Father's heart, and the express image of His Person.[1]

[1] Cf. "Mansel on the Gnostic Heresies," p. 127.

Cyprian.

BY THE

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CYPRIAN.

ABOUT one hundred years or less after the death of St. John, there was born at Carthage, somewhere near the year 200 A.D., a member of a noble and wealthy heathen family named Thascius Cyprianus.

Christian literature outside the New Testament had already been enriched by the Epistle of Clement, by the Epistles of Ignatius, by the Apologies of Quadratus, Aristides, Justin Martyr, Melito, and Tatian. Irenæus, Bishop of Lyon in Gaul, had written his great work against heresies. The great Catechetical School had been founded at Alexandria by Pantænus, and the eloquent and wide-minded Clement of Alexandria was teaching there. Origen, who was to succeed them, was about fifteen years old. Tertullian, the greatest theologian of the Western Church, was already writing and preaching at Carthage, and at the beginning of the third century presented his Apology during the Fifth General Persecution. The second century had been braced by severe persecutions. The Third General Persecution, which had begun in 106, had given the Protomartyr Symeon of Jerusalem and Ignatius of Antioch. The Fourth General Persecution in 106 cost

the lives of Justin, Melito, and Polycarp. Eleven years later had come the striking and beautiful death of the martyrs of Lyon and Vienne in Gaul. In 202 came the martyrdom of Irenæus, Bishop of Lyon, and Pantænus, the head of the school at Alexandria. Christians, especially those that were in prominent places, knew that a flame of suspicion and hatred might flare out against them at any moment, and their lives might be demanded. Belief was strong, and in many cases there was a genuine passion for martyrdom, a speedy entrance into the many mansions of the blessed land.

Judaism had been finally separated from Christianity after the desecration of Jerusalem by Hadrian, about the year 135 A.D., and the slaughter of 580,000 Jews. The heresies were chiefly those of Gnosticism, or the mixture of Eastern mystic speculations with the doctrines of Christianity; Montanism, or the morbid excess of asceticism; and the Patripassian heresies of Praxeas, Noetus, and others, who taught that the Father and the Son were the same subject, which as spirit is the Father, and as flesh the Son, blaming the Catholic doctrine as tritheistic.

Carthage would at this time be a beautiful city, partly Eastern, partly Roman, with white walls and houses shining by the blue waters of the Mediterranean, rich in temples and public buildings, in gardens, palm trees, and every kind of attraction and advantage. Here the young patrician passed his early life, who was to become the impersonation of the

Catholic Church of the middle of the third century. Not much can be made out of his life before his conversion. A short biography was written of him after his death by his deacon Pontius, but he did not think that what happened to his master while he was a heathen was worth recording. He was at any rate in high repute as a teacher of rhetoric, and a man of commanding literary and legal culture, and of eminent administrative ability, which afterwards proved of much service to him in his great episcopal office. He had a wonderful memory, and extraordinary copiousness and facility in quotation. He writes in Latin in an extremely polished style, closely modelled on Cicero. Augustine points out that it became simpler and more beautiful as time went on, possibly with the purer taste of Christianity.[1]

His personal address was dignified, conciliatory, affectionate; his looks attractive by their grave joyousness; his dress corresponded to his tone of mind. He never assumed the philosopher's pall or cloak which his favourite authority Tertullian had maintained to be the only dress for Christians; he thought its plainness pretentious. He continued to dress as a patrician, but without luxury. Augustine speaks of the tradition of his gentleness; and he never lost the friendship of heathens of high rank. He lived in worldly splendour to mature age, nor was he free from the common vices of heathenism, as his own confessions imply. His

[1] Compare Dict. of Christian Biography, Article "Cyprian," by Archbishop Benson.

landed property was considerable, and his house and gardens beautiful.

It was a worthy old presbyter named Cæcilius, who lived in Cyprian's house, and afterwards at his death committed his wife and children to his care, who first made him acquainted with the doctrines of the Christian religion, and moved him to read the Bible. Christian doctrines, especially that of the new birth, had often excited his wonder but not his derision. After long resistance Cyprian forsook the world, entered the class of catechumens, sold his estates for the benefit of the poor, took a vow of chastity, and in 245 or 246, when he was about forty-six years old, received baptism, adopting, out of gratitude to his spiritual father, the name of Cæcilius. His family name, Cyprianus, possibly indicated that his forefathers had come from the island of Cyprus.

Cyprian now devoted himself zealously in ascetic retirement to the study of the Bible and the Church Teachers, especially Tertullian, whom he called for daily with the words, "Hand me the Master!" He analysed and conversed with the circle about him on Scripture lives, and composed a tract against Polytheism, freely borrowing, but without acknowledgment, both from Minucius Felix the Apologist and from Tertullian.

Only two years after his baptism, while still a neophyte, Cyprian was raised to the Bishopric of Carthage by the acclamations of the people, and was thus at the same time placed at the head of the whole North African clergy. Five presbyters opposed the elec-

tion, and this afterwards led to the schism of the party of Novatus. But though Cyprian himself was sincerely reluctant, the people would take no denial; and the result, as in the case of the similar elevation of Ambrose, Augustine, and other eminent bishops of the ancient Church, justified any irregularity in the means. Cyprian rests his title on the election of the laity, the special Divine call of God, and the consent of his fellow-bishops. In ordinary cases he considers that the approbation of neighbouring bishops is necessary to a valid appointment. It is curious to note that Cyprian is called Papa, Father, or Pope, and that by the Roman clergy, even before the title was applied to the Bishop of Rome. A still earlier use occurs at Alexandria, but it probably began yet farther back at Carthage.

It has been said by a learned writer, Dr. Hebert,[1] that to compare him with Archbishop Laud would be invidious, for he was more winning and attractive. But he had the same object. In spite of the heavenly glory that shone about him at his martyrdom, it is not possible to deny that his distinction among the early fathers is that he was the first to gather into one powerful agency the previously scattered and floating elements of episcopal autocracy, and to give actual consistency to the idea of the exclusive unity of the visible Church. To those who see benefits in such a development, he becomes the honoured Moses of these views of the Church's constitution. But to the greater number of Christian people, who believe that both

[1] "The Lord's Supper," vol. i. p. 114.

these principles have been exaggerated, and pushed too far for the welfare of Christendom, the signs of ignorance and haste are visible with the signs of ability and goodness.

The same view is taken by Bishop Lightfoot:[1] "If with Ignatius the bishop is the centre of Christian unity, if with Irenæus he is the depositary of the apostolic tradition, with Cyprian he is the absolute vicegerent of Christ in things spiritual. In mere strength of language, indeed, it would be difficult to surpass Ignatius, who lived about a century and a half earlier. With the single exception of the sacerdotal view of the ministry which had grown up meanwhile, Cyprian puts forward no assumption which Ignatius had not advanced either literally or substantially long before. This one exception, however, is all important; for it raised the sanctions of the episcopate to a higher level, and put new force into old titles of respect. Theoretically, therefore, it may be said that Cyprian took his stand on the combination of the ecclesiastical authority as stated by Ignatius, with the sacerdotal claim which had been developed in the half-century just past. But the real influence which he exercised in the elevation of the episcopate consisted, not in the novelty of his theoretical views, but in his practical energy and success. The absolute supremacy of the bishop had remained hitherto a lofty title, or at least a vague, ill-defined assumption; it became through his exertions a substantial and patent and world-

[1] "Epistle to the Philippians," Article "The Christian Ministry."

wide fact. The first prelate whose force of character vibrated through the whole of Christendom, he was driven not less by the circumstances of his position than by his own temperament and conviction to throw all his energy into this scale. And the permanent result was much vaster than he could have anticipated beforehand or realised after the fact. Forced into the episcopate against his will, he raised it to a position of absolute independence, from which it has never since been deposed. The two great controversies in which Cyprian engaged (and which make up the staple of his life) combined from opposite sides to consolidate and enhance the power of the bishops."

The first question of dispute concerned the treatment of such as had lapsed during the recent persecution under Decius. Lapsing, of course, meant burning incense to the gods, in token of compliance with heathenism.

The sufferings under the Imperial Commissioners by the Decian edict were very severe. They were by torture, stifling imprisonments, and even fire. Fancy an ordinary congregation of nineteenth century English Christians exposed to such a temptation and trial! Women and boys were among the victims. Exile and confiscation were employed. Those who wished to save their property and livelihood had no chance except to remain, and conform by throwing incense on the fire upon the pagan altars. How easy to persuade oneself that God could be worshipped as well in that way as in any other, and so to deny

Christ! In the first terror there was a large voluntary abjuration of Christianity, whether literally by the majority of the flock may be uncertain, but Cyprian felt himself "seated in the ruins of his house." Scenes of painful vividness are sketched in his eloquent letters. Many of the clergy fell or fled, leaving scarcely enough for the daily duty of the city; so did many provincial bishops.

"Cyprian found himself on this occasion doing battle for the episcopate against a twofold opposition —against the confessors, who claimed the right of absolving and restoring (from their superior and supererogatory merits) these (weaker and) fallen brethren, and against his own presbyters, who in the (enforced) absence of their bishops, supported the claims of the confessors. From his retirement" Cyprian guided the policy of the whole West upon the tremendous questions of Church communion which now arose. There was indifferentism on the one hand, offering the lapsed an easy return, by means of indulgences from or in the name of martyrs and confessors; there was on the other hand a rigid Puritanism barring all return. Between these two difficulties, Cyprian "launched his shafts against this combined array, where an aristocracy of moral influence was leagued with an aristocracy of official position. With signal determination and courage in pursuing his aim, and with not less sagacity and address in discerning the means for carrying it out, Cyprian had on this occasion the further advantage that he was defending the cause

of order and right."[1] That the lapsed should be at once restored by the vain-glorious recommendation and merits of those who had taken the bolder course, risked their lives and confessed Christ, was obviously monstrous and absurd. That such a preposterous practice should be propounded and supported shows us how little reliance we can place on the customs even of the third century as guides for our own ecclesiastical conduct. "The granting of indulgences to lapsed persons by confessors and martyrs, which had been first questioned and then sharply criticised by Tertullian, grew very quickly under the influence of some of those (bigoted) clergy who had been opposed to Cyprian's election. The popular veneration for sufferers who seemed to be the very saviours of Christianity was intense; and many heads were turned by the adulatory language of their greatest chiefs. The tickets of pardon granted by the confessors would presently have superseded all other terms of communion. An extraordinary document is even extant in form of an absolution 'to all the lapsed' from 'all the confessors,' which the bishops are desired to promulge. Rioters in some of the provincial towns extorted Communion from their presbyters. He succeeded, moreover, in enlisting in his cause the rulers of the most powerful Church in Christendom. The Roman clergy declared for the Bishop of Carthage, and against his (rebellious) presbyters. Of Cyprian's sincerity no reasonable question can be entertained.

[1] Bishop Lightfoot.

In maintaining the authority of his office he believed himself to be fighting his Master's battles, and he sought success as the only safeguard of the integrity of the Church of Christ. In this lofty and disinterested spirit, and with these advantages of position, he entered upon the contest."[1]

It is not possible or desirable here to follow out the conflict in detail, to show how ultimately the positions of the two combatants were shifted, so that from maintaining discipline against the champions of too great laxity Cyprian found himself protecting the fallen against the advocates of too great severity; to trace the progress of the schism and the attempt to establish a rival episcopate, or to unravel the entanglements of the Novatian controversy, and lay open the intimate relations between Rome and Carthage. It is sufficient to say that Cyprian's victory was complete. He triumphed over the confessors, triumphed over his own presbyters, triumphed over the schismatic bishop and his party. It was the most signal success hitherto achieved for the episcopate, because the battle had been fought and the victory won on this definite issue. The absolute supremacy of the episcopal office was thus established against the two antagonists from which it had most to fear, against a recognised aristocracy of ecclesiastical office (the presbyters), and against an irregular but not less powerful aristocracy of moral weight (the confessors).

"The position of the Bishop with respect to the in-

[1] Bishop Lightfoot.

dividual church over which he ruled was thus defined by the first contest in which Cyprian engaged. The second conflict resulted in determining his relation to the Church universal. The schism which had grown up during the first conflict created the difficulty which gave occasion to the second. A question arose whether baptism by heretics and schismatics should be held valid or not. Stephen, the Roman Bishop, pleading the immemorial custom of his Church, recognised its validity. Cyprian insisted on rebaptism in such cases. Hitherto the Bishop of Carthage had acted in cordial harmony with Rome; but now there was a collision. Stephen, inheriting the haughty temper and aggressive policy of his earlier predecessor Victor, excommunicated those who differed from the Roman usage in this matter. These arrogant assumptions were directly met by Cyprian. He summoned first one and then another synod of African bishops who declared in his favour. He had on his side also the churches of Asia Minor, which had been included in Stephen's edict of excommunication. Thus the bolt hurled by Stephen fell innocuous, and the churches of Africa and Asia retained their practice. The principle asserted in the struggle was not unimportant. As in the former conflict Cyprian had maintained the independent supremacy of the bishop over the officers and members of his own congregation, so now he contended successfully for his immunity from any interference from without. At a later period indeed Rome carried the victory, but the immediate result of this controversy was to establish

the independence and enhance the power of the episcopate. Moreover, this struggle had the further and not less important consequence of defining and exhibiting the relations of the episcopate to the Church in another way. As the individual bishop had been pronounced indispensable to the existence of the individual community, so the episcopal order was now put forward as the absolute indefeasible representation of the Universal Church. Synods of Bishops indeed had been held frequently before; but under Cyprian's guidance they assumed a prominence which threw all existing precedents into the shade. A one undivided episcopate was his watchword. The unity of the Church, he maintained, consists in the unity of the bishops. In this controversy, as in the former, he acted throughout on the principle, distinctly asserted, that the existence of the episcopal office was not a matter of practical advantage or ecclesiastical rule, or even of apostolical sanction, but an absolute incontrovertible decree of God. The triumph of Cyprian therefore was the triumph of this principle."[1]

Cyprian was aiming at an impossible external unity which must necessarily break down. Such is the imperfection of human nature that there can be no unity for the Christian Church except through the intimate union of each individual member with Christ the Head. On this point I quote with great delight the words of Bishop Westcott. And indeed it is a special gratification to me this afternoon to quote freely and largely

[1] Bishop Lightfoot.

from the great triad of the three brotherly divines of our day, Lightfoot, Westcott, and Benson, one in their school-days, one in their college life, one in their theology, one in their episcopate. Bishop Westcott says, "We believe that there is one Church, the Body of which Christ is the Head. If we look only at the outside of things, there is nothing to justify the bold avowal. The words have been repeated for more than 1500 years, and that whole interval has been darkened by the record of corruptions and revolution, of schisms and heresies. The words are now repeated by different societies throughout the world which refuse to one another the visible signs of fellowship. Can we then—let us ask ourselves the question plainly—can we profess our belief that there is *one* Church when we recall the divisions of Christendom, as we must do in sorrow of heart? *One* Church when rival bodies challenge our allegiance and compass sea and land to make a proselyte? One Church when a deathlike torpor has fallen over the East, and the farthest West is too often hurried away by a wild fanaticism? One Church when each noblest communion is itself broken into parties eager to narrow the limits of their inheritance by the peculiarities of their own opinions? One Church when on this side and on that we are answered by anathema if we bear the greeting of peace? Yes! I believe that there is one Church, though I cannot see its unity, in spite of lethargy and unchastened zeal, in spite of the private creeds and reckless judgments which seem to separate what God has joined together.

In this respect the trial of our faith is no new thing. There never was an epoch since the Church spread beyond Jerusalem, when the one body of Christ was one in visible uniformity, or even one in perfect sympathy. Time has indeed hardened and multiplied the differences between the several parts into which the Church is divided, but it is possible to trace already in the apostolic age the essential features of those divisions over which we grieve. And if we look forward to the fulfilment of the great promise which gladdens the future, it is not that there shall ever be, as we wrongly read, one fold, one outward Society of Christians gathered in one outward form, but what answers more truly to present experience and reasonable hope, 'one Flock and one Shepherd.' And in the meantime, let us rate the differences of Christians as highly as we will, there yet remains a common faith in the presence of which they are almost as nothing. He who believes, to take the ground of the apostolic message on the day of Pentecost, that Christ rose from the dead, he who is baptized into Him, he who rejoices though trembling in the pledge of a glorified humanity, is divided from the world without by an interval as wide as that between life and death. In this one faith, one baptism, one hope of our calling, lies a universal fellowship of believers, the symbol and the earnest of the brotherhood of men, the single truth which taken alone distinguishes for ever Christian from ancient thought."[1]

[1] Bishop Westcott, "The Historic Faith."

Thus our Church prays for Christ's Holy Catholic Church, that is for *the whole congregation of Christian people dispersed throughout the whole world.* In another place we pray for the good estate of the Catholic Church, that it may be so guided and governed by God's good Spirit, that all who profess and call themselves Christians may be led into the way of truth, and hold the faith in *unity of spirit*, in *the bond of peace*, and in righteousness of life. Thus in the Communion Office we pray that Almighty God may inspire continually the universal Church with the *spirit* of truth, unity, and concord, and would grant that *all they that do confess His Holy Name*, may *agree in the truth of His Holy Word*, and live in unity and godly love.

"The greatness of Cyprian's influence on the episcopate is indeed due to this fact, that with him the statement of the principle precedes and necessitates the practical measures. . . . Of his conception of the episcopal office generally, thus much may be said here, that he regards the bishop as exclusively the representative of God to the congregation, and hardly if at all as the representative of the congregation before God. The bishop is the indispensable channel of Divine grace, the indispensable bond of Christian brotherhood. The episcopate is not so much the roof as the foundation-stone of the ecclesiastical edifice; not so much the legitimate development as the primary condition of a Church. The bishop is appointed directly by God, is responsible directly to God, is inspired directly from

God. This last point deserves especial notice. Though in words he frequently defers to the established usage of consulting the presbyters and even the laity in the appointment of officers and in other matters affecting the well-being of the community, yet he only makes the concession to nullify it immediately. He pleads a direct official inspiration which enables him to dispense with ecclesiastical custom, and to act on his own responsibility. Though the presbyters may still have retained the shadow of a controlling power over the acts of the bishop, though the courtesy of language by which they were recognised as fellow-presbyters was not laid aside, yet for all practical ends the independent supremacy of the episcopate was completely established by the principles and the measures of Cyprian."[1]

This was indeed a tremendous responsibility to assume, and has had a lasting effect for evil on the fortunes of Christianity in the aspect of its relations to mankind as a temporal and external organisation. It is wholly contrary to the New Testament ideal. Even the Apostles themselves assumed no such prerogatives. St. Paul entreats, beseeches, urges, persuades; command is conspicuous by its absence from his writings. His humility is remarkable on every page. He associates his friends and fellow-presbyters with himself on every possible occasion. The Epistles are addressed not only to the elders but to the laity of the churches. The bishop in the New Testament is the same as the presbyter; the terms are interchangeable. He gra-

[1] Bishop Lightfoot.

dually became a *primus inter pares;* but Bishop Lightfoot has shown that the office was a growth from below, as circumstances required and suggested, not a delegation from above. The warnings of our Lord, "Be not ye called Rabbi," "Be not ye called Master;" the warnings of the Epistles not to "lord it over God's heritage," are totally incompatible with the position which Cyprian, from the best of motives, assumed. The unity of the Church depends not on external machinery, but on union between Christ and His members individually, not corporately. "I am the vine, ye are the branches." "As the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ." That is the view also of the English Prayer Book. The visible Church is a principle rather than a close corporation. It should be united if possible; but purity of doctrine is even more important than perfection of machinery. "The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men in the which the pure word of God is preached, and the sacraments duly administered according to Christ's ordinance in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same."

The office of the bishop in our English Church is placed on its primitive level. Our Prayer Book is careful only to assert the historical principle that there always have been bishops, not to claim for the episcopate any Divine right, or to describe it as virtually a close corporation with any exclusive possession of Divine grace, or as a doctrine necessary to salvation. "It is evident

unto all men diligently reading the Holy Scripture and ancient authors that from the Apostles' time there have been these orders of ministers in Christ's Church, Bishops, Priests, and Deacons." In the Office for the Consecration of a Bishop there is no hint of any doctrinal efficacy in apostolical succession, however interesting and important historically: the imposition of hands is simply after the custom of the Apostles. "Remember that thou stir up the grace of God which is given thee by this imposition of our hands; for God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and love, and soberness; give heed unto reading, exhortation, and doctrine. Be diligent in them, that the increase coming thereby may be manifest unto all men. Take heed unto thyself and to doctrine, and be diligent in doing them; for by so doing thou shalt save both thyself and them that hear thee. Be to the flock of Christ a shepherd, not a wolf; feed them, devour them not. Hold up the weak, heal the sick, bind up the broken, bring again the outcasts, seek the lost. Be so merciful that you be not too remiss; so minister discipline that you forget not mercy; that when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, you may receive the never-fading crown of glory." These are the ideals for our English bishops at the sacred moment of their consecration, the ideals of Scripture, the words of Scripture. The English bishop is appointed by the Crown, on the nomination of the Prime Minister, speaking in the name of the people. He cannot ordain, except after examination by the archdeacons and with the co-opera-

tion of the presbyters in laying on their hands; he cannot displace a clergyman except for legal cause; he cannot punish a clergyman except through process of law and for specified reasons and acts; he is as much bound by the authorised law of the Church and the realm as the humblest of his presbyters. No decisions of English bishops are binding on the Church, even when they are assembled in council, unless they are according to law, or unless they receive the sanction of law through the laity.

Again, with regard to sacerdotalism, or the necessity of a sacrificing priesthood, Bishop Lightfoot has proved with great care and elaboration that the sacerdotal functions and privileges which alone are mentioned in the apostolic writings pertain to all believers alike, and do not refer solely or specially to the ministerial office. It was Tertullian who was the first to assert direct sacerdotal claims on behalf of the Christian ministry. Yet he himself supplies the true counterpoise to this special sacerdotalism in his strong assertion of the universal priesthood of all true believers. "Are not we laymen also priests? It is written, 'He hath also made us a kingdom and priests to God and His Father.' It is the authority of the Church which makes a difference between the Order and the People —this authority and the consecration of their rank by the assignment of special benches to the clergy. Thus where there is no bench of clergy, *you* present the eucharistic offerings, and baptize, and are your own sole priest."

"If Tertullian and Origen," continues Bishop Lightfoot, "are still hovering on the border (of sacerdotalism), Cyprian has boldly transferred himself into the new domain. It is not only that he uses the terms *sacerdos*, *sacerdotium*, *sacerdotalis* of the ministry with a frequency hitherto without parallel; but he treats all the passages in the Old Testament which refer to the privileges, the sanctions, the duties, and the responsibilities of the Aaronic priesthood as applying to the offices of the Christian Church. His opponents are profane and sacrilegious; they have passed sentence of death on themselves by disobeying the command of the Lord in Deuteronomy to hear the priest; they have forgotten the injunction of Solomon to honour and reverence God's priests; they have despised the example of St. Paul, who regretted that he did not know it was the high priest; they have been guilty of the sin of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. These passages are urged again and again. They are urged, moreover, as applying, not by parity of reasoning, not by analogy of circumstance, but as absolute and immediate and unquestionable. As Cyprian crowned the edifice of episcopal power, so also was he the first to put forward without relief or disguise these sacerdotal assumptions; and so uncompromising was the tone in which he asserted them, that nothing was left to his successors but to enforce his principles and reiterate his language."

The polished Roman gentleman, converted from heathenism late in life, got the hint from Tertullian,

neglected Tertullian's modifications, and poured into his theory the whole associations of pagan sacerdotalism, dressing it in Jewish form. Bishop Lightfoot goes on to show that the earliest Jewish-Christian writings contain no trace of this spirit; that sacerdotalism was due to Gentile influences, and subsequently sought support in Old Testament analogies.

I do not see why we should consider Cyprian as having in this matter any independent authority. The Fathers are important as giving evidence of the state of Christian opinion and practice in their own days. But, as Bishop Latimer says, the Fathers have both weeds and herbs; and it is most absurd and unreasonable to select from their writings the weeds as well as the herbs, or, as is sometimes the case, the weeds instead of the herbs. Cyprian was clearly an innovator. In the whole century and a half between the death of St. John and his own episcopate, in all the valuable writings that we have, there is nothing like his theory of the Divine right and Divine inspiration of the bishop, nothing like his principle of sacerdotalism. That Cyprian was not well instructed in Scripture is obvious by his astounding use of quotations from the Old Testament. No writer quotes from it more continuously and abundantly, and no writer with more amazing and bewildering disregard of the meaning, sense, context, and application. While we thank Cyprian for his eloquence, ability, courage, and beautiful character, we altogether decline to follow him in his ignorant and ill-informed innovations.

It is impossible either to measure or to exaggerate the influence of Cyprian on the succeeding generations of the Church down to the Reformation. "But," says Professor Schaff, "it were great injustice to attribute his sacerdotal principles to pride and ambition, though temptations to this spirit unquestionably beset a prominent position like his. Such principles are entirely compatible with sincere personal humility before God. It was the deep conviction of the Divine authority and the heavy responsibility of the episcopate which lay at the bottom both of his first *nolo episcopari* and of his subsequent hierarchical feeling. He was as conscientious in discharging the duties as he was jealous in maintaining the rights of his office. Notwithstanding his high conception of the dignity of a bishop, he took counsel with his presbyters in everything, and respected the rights of his people. He knew how to combine strictness and moderation, dignity and gentleness, and to inspire love and confidence as well as esteem and veneration. He took upon himself, like a father, the care of the widows and orphans, the poor and sick. During the great pestilence of 252 he showed the most self-sacrificing fidelity to his flock, and love for his enemies. He forsook his congregation indeed in the Decian persecution, but only, as he expressly assured them, in pursuance of a Divine admonition and in order to direct them during his fourteen months of exile by pastoral epistles. His conduct exposed him to the charge of cowardice, and to the sneers of the confessors. In the Valerian persecution he completely

counteracted the impression of that flight by the blood of his calm and cheerful martyrdom."

He was the first who brought councils of bishops into prominent authority and importance. There is no precedent in Scripture or the primitive Church for bishops sitting alone without their presbyters and most trusted laymen, and promulgating decrees for the churches. The results of Cyprian's councils are illustrations of the warning that our Prayer Book gives us, that councils, inasmuch as they be composed of men whereof all be not subject to the Holy Spirit of God, they may err, and have erred in matters concerning the faith. Archbishop Benson, in his extremely valuable Article on Cyprian in the Dictionary of Christian Biography, draws a moral from Cyprian's councils. They were on the question whether those who had relapsed into heathenism must be baptized again. The Bishop and clergy of Rome decided that when a man was once baptized he was brought into covenant with God, and only needed to be restored. Cyprian's councils included in the visible Church the worst moral sinner in expectation of his penitence; they excluded the most virtuous and orthodox baptized Christian who had not been baptized by a Catholic minister. "The unanimity of such early councils and the erroneousness are a remarkable monition. Not packed; not pressed; the question broad; no attack on an individual; only a principle sought; the assembly representative; each bishop the elect of his flock; and all men of the world, often Christianised, generally or-

dained late in life; converted against their interests by conviction formed in an age of freest discussion; their chief one in whom were rarely blended intellectual and political ability with holiness, sweetness, and self-discipline. The conclusion reached by such an assembly—uncharitable, unscriptural, uncatholic, and unanimous. The consolation as strange as the disappointment. The mischief silently and perfectly healed by the simple working of the Christian society. Life corrected the error of thought. . . . The disappearance of the Cyprianic decisions has its hope for us when we look on bonds seemingly inextricable and steps as yet irretrievable. It may be noted as affording some clue to the one-sided decisions that the laity were silent. . . . It must have been among them that there were in existence and at work those very principles which so soon not only rose to the surface but overpowered the voices of her bishops for the general good."

Cyprian exercised at first rigid discipline, but at a later period—not in perfect consistency—he moderated his disciplinary principles in prudent accommodation to the exigencies of the times. With Tertullian he prohibited all display of female dress, which only deformed the work of the Creator; and he warmly opposed all participation in heathen amusements, even refusing a converted play-actor permission to give instruction in declamation and pantomime. He lived in a simple ascetic way, under a sense of the perishableness of all earthly things, and in view of the solemn eternity in which alone the questions and strifes of the Church

militant would be perfectly settled. "Only above," says he in his tract *De Mortalitate*, which he composed during the pestilence, "only above are true peace, sure repose, constant, firm, and eternal security; there is our dwelling, there our home. Who would not fain hasten to reach it? There a great multitude of beloved awaits us—the numerous host of fathers, brethren, and children. There is the glorious choir of Apostles; there the number of exulting prophets; there the countless multitude of martyrs, crowned with victory after warfare and suffering; there triumphing virgins; there the merciful enjoying their reward. Thither let us hasten with longing desire; let us wish to be soon with them, soon with Christ. After the earthly comes the heavenly; after the small follows the great; after perishableness eternity."

During the Valerian persecution he was sent into exile for eleven months, then tried before the Proconsul, and condemned to be beheaded. When the sentence was pronounced, he said, "Thanks be to God," knelt in prayer, tied the bandage over his eyes with his own hand, gave to the executioner a gold piece, and died with the dignity and composure of a hero. His friends removed and buried his body by night. Two chapels were erected on the spots of his death and burial. The anniversary of his death was long observed, and five sermons of Augustine still remain in memory of Cyprian's martyrdom, September 14, 258. Cyprian's head was nearly six centuries afterwards presented by the great Mahometan Sultan,

Haroun-al-Raschid, to the illustrious Christian Emperor Charlemagne, and preserved at the church of Compiègne in France.

Such was Cyprian: learned, eloquent, brave, polished, cultured, powerful in combination, impressive in organisation, a born ruler of men, an embodiment of that contradiction in terms, "a prince of the Church." His influence for evil on Christendom, East and West, by introducing into the simplicity of the Gospel of Christ the hierarchical and sacerdotal principles from his heathen associations, and making them palatable by dressing them in Jewish form, has been absolutely beyond all calculation. But God overrules everything for good. At the Reformation the true Scriptural and primitive ideal of the first and second centuries was restored. God grant that we may not have the folly to throw away what our forefathers won for us with their blood, and, while admiring the virtues, to imitate the ignorance and the mistakes of Cyprian!

The Life and Times of St. Chrysostom.

BY THE

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THE LIFE AND TIMES OF ST. CHRYSOSTOM.

"He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things. And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."—EPHESIANS iv. 10-12.

THE passage I have just read from the Epistle to the Ephesians will suggest at once to you, that in the course of Addresses to which you have been invited to listen, we are not *merely* considering eminent names in the Christian Church, but considering them as the ministers of Christ, raised up from time to time for the instruction and government of His Church. We are too often inclined to leave out of sight this most important truth, that our Blessed Lord since His Ascension continues to govern His Church on earth. Like Gideon in the Old Testament, we are often tempted to think that we have been forgotten, to repeat in his words in the time of trouble and adversity, "O my Lord, if the Lord *be* with us, why then is all this befallen us, and where be all the miracles which our fathers told us of?" Doubtless many a troubled

heart has asked a similar question, and may find a similar answer. At the very time at which Gideon spoke, the messenger from heaven, unknown to him, was proving by his visible presence, that God had not forgotten His people. So far from miracles having ceased, it only needed Gideon's eyes to be opened to see—even there before him—one which was then being wrought. And may it not be, that it only needs our eyes to be opened to behold evidences of our Lord's government of His Church, through raising up, from time to time, men whose characters and influence cannot be accounted for by the mere circumstances of their parentage and education. The flower is not evolved from the circumstances of the garden, although those circumstances must always influence its growth and perfection.

Viewed in this respect, the Course of Lectures in Church History will form an important link in the evidences of Christianity, as well as tending to strengthen our individual faith. Probably it was this feeling which led Neander, the converted Jew, to study the life of St. Chrysostom so deeply. To him, joining the Christian Church, as to others brought up in the Church, and inclined by their naturalt urn of mind, or by circumstances, to consider the difficulties of their position, the question of all questions is, Whether the same Lord Jesus, whose life on earth is described in the Gospels, continues to be our living Divine Saviour, though removed from our bodily sight; whether, as described in the Revelation, He still walks in the

midst of His Church, upholding His ministers with His right hand? This question goes far towards asking, whether He was indeed Divine, and whether the promises in the Bible are true. We trust that the consideration of the Life and Times of St. Chrysostom, as well as the other characters discussed in this course of Lectures, may be a help, however small, towards answering this question. The Epistle to the Ephesians, from which the introductory text is quoted, speaks of the manifestation of the power of the ascended Lord, and the proof that He governed the Church from heaven by sending apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. While therefore we consider the circumstances of St. Chrysostom's life, we believe that life was not only consecrated to the service *of* Christ, but was a gift *from* Christ to His *Church.*

In studying the early life of any eminent man, and considering the influences which affected his character, we naturally inquire about his home, his teachers, his companions, and what has been called "the spirit of the age" in which he lived. All these four influences may be traced in the life of St. Chrysostom, and every one of them was remarkable. His father, Secundus, was an officer in the Imperial Army of the Roman Empire, who held an important command at Antioch, a city which from its position was a military centre of great strength near the passes leading from Syria into Asia Minor. Antioch had other claims to importance which came closer to the Christian heart. The fair city on the banks of the Orontes had long been a seat

of speculative thought and literary activity, Greek in origin, nourished on Asiatic soil, and in the Christian Church the pre-eminence of the city was manifested in a new form. Antioch was now the seat of one of the five Patriarchates into which the Christian world was divided, and in the rivalry between Jerusalem, Alexandria, Antioch, Constantinople, and Rome, no one who defended the dignity of the native place of St. Chrysostom was likely to forget that the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.

Both the father and mother of St. Chrysostom were of high family. His mother, Anthusa, was left a widow when he was a little child, and, like most Christian widows at that time, she lived in comparative seclusion, and declined all subsequent offers of marriage, devoting herself entirely to the care and education of her son. That her widowhood was accompanied by severe privations may be inferred from her own expression quoted by her illustrious son, "that she did not shrink from the iron furnace of widowhood." When Chrysostom was twenty years of age he became the pupil of the famous rhetorician Libanius, a man who was nominally a Pagan, though this probably only meant that he did not believe in any definite form of religion, and looked on Christianity as but one more added to the many forms of belief then existing in the world. That there should be professed heathen still in a prominent Christian city when St. Chrysostom was a young man, reminds us at once of the important period in the world's history in which

his youth was cast. Although the teacher was a heathen and the pupil a Christian, each seemed to have a respect for the other, and to admire his intellectual power. Libanius was the most distinguished teacher of rhetoric then living, and probably the gorgeous style of the future Christian orator, and his flowing and rhythmical sentences, owed much to those early lessons.

One remark remaining on record, addressed by Libanius to his pupil, showed the admiration felt for St. Chrysostom's mother. When introduced to the school, the teacher inquired about the parents of the young man, and having heard that his father was dead nearly twenty years, and that his mother, in devotion to her husband's memory, remained a widow, he exclaimed, "*What wonderful wives these Christians have!*"

Another story recorded, showing the admiration which Libanius felt for his pupil, refers to the close of the teacher's labours. When some friend asked who he thought worthy to succeed him, he replied, "*John, if the Christians had not stolen him from us.*" The influence of Libanius marks the closing period of the Paganism of Antioch. But Antioch by becoming Christian did not cease to be learned. It now held a prominent place in the Christian world for theological studies. The school of theology at Antioch meant more than the phrase does occasionally in modern times when it is applied to a number of theologians holding similar views and following

like methods of teaching. Antioch, besides having a school of theology in this sense, honourably distinguished by close and persevering study of the Scriptures, had an actual college for the education of young men who might be expected hereafter to enter the ministry of the Church. Into this school or college Chrysostom passed from the teaching of Libanius, and there were spent what we should in modern language call his college days, influenced, as such days are to every student, by his teachers and companions.

The teacher whose influence on St. Chrysostom made the deepest impression, and became of the most permanent character, was Diodorus, who afterwards became Bishop of Tarsus. He gave expositions of the Scriptures, and taught his pupils rather to study the literal sense and the natural meaning than to seek after hidden and allegoric interpretations. This advice, which was followed by St. Chrysostom, bore ample fruit in the wonderful homilies which afterwards made him so famous, and which were all in a manner worked out of the Bible itself. Another distinguished Bishop who influenced the youthful Chrysostom, though more as a friend and adviser than an actual teacher, was Meletius, Bishop of Antioch, by whom St. Chrysostom was baptized and ordained deacon. Meletius was a man of most amiable disposition. Biographers loved to recall his "sweet, calm look and radiant smile." Yet he did not escape persecution when the divisions in the Christian Church, consequent upon the introduction of the Arian heresy,

led to the weaker party being from time to time expelled and banished.

Meletius had been preaching on the Divinity of Christ, and his sermon was based upon that favourite passage in the book of Proverbs describing Wisdom as a person—"The Lord possessed me in the beginning of His way, before His works of old" (Proverbs viii. 22). For applying this passage to Christ he was suspected of favouring the Arians and banished from his diocese; but after about a month allowed to return, when his influence became greater than ever.

At the School or College which John Chrysostom entered, he soon became an intimate friend of Basil and Theodore, whose glory in the Church would have been greater if their light had not been obscured by the proximity of their illustrious friend. But just as the smaller planets influence the orbit of the greater, so it is with our friends, often in a greater degree than we are aware. The influence of young men on one another is frequently more than the influence of their teachers. They talk together of their feelings and difficulties, and in so doing, find sympathy and help; which, even if older men would give, the younger are reluctant to ask. Theodore, Basil, and Chrysostom bethought themselves of taking a house on their own account, and living together in celibacy and asceticism. Their harmony was, for a short time, interrupted by Theodore seeing and admiring a girl named Hermione; and for her sake he was about to withdraw from the monastic brotherhood. We

regret to add that, overcome by the entreaties of his two friends, he broke off his engagement with Hermione. What her feelings were history does not record, but there is reason to believe that in after years Theodore doubted whether he had made a wise decision. The subsequent history of Theodore is one, out of many instances, to show that the life of a student does not necessarily unfit a man for more active duties in the Church. Theodore left the College at Antioch, to become Bishop of Mopsuestia, in which sphere he was eminently successful; yet it is as an expositor of Scripture and a friend of St. Chrysostom that he is best known. At first St. Chrysostom found great fault with his friend Theodore, for giving up the seclusion of a monastic life, and the teaching of Scripture, to take charge of a populous diocese; yet it was not very long before the critic followed the example which he criticised.

The history of Basil is remarkable for quite a different reason. He and Chrysostom were ordained about the same time, and when they were both subsequently nominated as Bishops, Chrysostom agreed with his friend that they should either both accept or both decline. The story is told by St. Chrysostom himself in his treatise on the Priesthood, which treatise is partly in the form of a narrative, partly of a dialogue with his friend. The passage contains the afterwards too famous phrase, "the economy of truth." He induced Basil to believe that he would accept the appointment, and, trusting to this assurance, Basil was

consecrated Bishop. On that day, however, Chrysostom did not come forward, and he excused himself afterwards by saying that his friend Basil would be a much more worthy Bishop, and it would be a pity if his services were lost to the Church. He had therefore encouraged him to accept the office by promising to accept a similar one himself, and having thus secured the appointment of Basil—which was the object he had in view the whole time—he felt himself justified in withdrawing at the last moment. To most persons reading the history, as indeed to ourselves, this appears a want of straightforwardness in St. Chrysostom which cannot be justified. His own attempt to justify it by referring to the example of Jacob's deceit in order to obtain a blessing, seems drawing the very opposite lesson from that portion of Scripture which it was intended to convey; for I have often pointed out that the whole subsequent history of Jacob shows in the clearest manner, by God's providence, how his life was spoiled by that course of deceit, and that Jacob's conduct, so far from being an example, *is in reality a warning*. God will not withdraw a gift which He has promised; but if we hasten to obtain it by crooked or unworthy means, we shall find that we have got a curse, and not a blessing.

This sort of deception, which has been called a "pious fraud," was only too common among the early Christians, and it is one of the few blots upon the character of such an eminent and holy man as St. Chrysostom, for a blot it undoubtedly was, although

not for obtaining any profit or honour to himself. It was one of those influences which we have called "the spirit of the age," which occasionally are found to warp even the finest and most steadfast characters.

Another influence at work in "the spirit of the time" by which St. Chrysostom was so much influenced that he was hardly able to exercise an independent judgment, was the exaltation of the ascetic mode of life which separated Christians into two great classes; and the monastic orders were supposed to be holier and nearer to heaven. Into this ascetic habit St. Chrysostom entered with enthusiasm and devotion. His austerity was so great that his health suffered and his constitution was weakened throughout his life. Even the entreaties of his mother, who appealed to him, on the ground that her whole life since his father's death had been lived entirely for his sake, could not entirely prevail upon him to abandon the monastic life. At last, however, he seems to have been persuaded that he would be more useful to the Church as an ordained minister than living in a solitary cell. His great learning and amiable character, his extraordinary power both in writing and speaking, had attracted the attention of all his teachers, and the Bishop of Antioch was anxious to utilise the gifts. Thus was St. Chrysostom persuaded to begin in Antioch that wonderful career as a preacher which made his name famous throughout the Christian world.

It is a standing subject of discussion whether a man's character is a cause or a result of his history,

and persons may argue on either side of the question. I have already expressed my opinion that the character of St. Chrysostom cannot be accounted for entirely either by his home, his parents, his teachers or companions, or "the spirit of the time;" although we have seen that each and all of these had an important influence over him. But if these things were the only causes, there would have been many Chrysostoms instead of only one.

In inquiring what sort of character is suited to produce a great preacher, we are brought face to face with the prevalence of evil in the human heart, and the question whether the preacher himself has felt and overcome those temptations which he describes to his hearers. There are characters in the world of child-like innocence; we admire them as we admire children, but we feel that they have not known sin or temptation to such a degree as to enable them to understand the trials of others, and such could not be great preachers, or exercise the deep influence of such a mighty orator as St. Chrysostom. There are others who have known sin by falling under it, but by the grace of God have been restored. Such was St. Augustine. He described what he knew—both the depth of misery and the height of grace. Such a man could be a great preacher, yet we venture to think that, however mighty be the power which has restored him, and however glorious the triumph of grace in his restoration, there must be a certain drawback to his influence. Others, as they hear the stern denunciations of sin, will

think of the past life of the preacher, and some will be tempted to say that they too may at least sip of the surface and taste the pleasures of sin for a season, and yet their case is not hopeless, for they also may be restored and forgiven. So true is it that a man's life exercises not only a far greater influence than his words, but that the very influence carried by his words is measured by his life. And if one with only the innocence of childhood cannot be a mighty orator, and if the sinner who has been restored ever carries about with him some drawback to his influence for good, we ask with interest, *Is there a character between those which can combine the innocence of childhood with the knowledge, but without the sin, of mature age?*

We think it is possible, and that the life of St. Chrysostom—the greatest preacher in the Christian Church since the days of the Apostles—is the nearest approach to such a character. We may imagine, for example, that an angel who has not sinned has yet more knowledge by *observation* of sin and wickedness than even the most experienced of human beings; and such too, though we hardly dare compare any human being with our Lord, must have been our Saviour's experience. He saw and knew all the wickedness in man without being defiled by it. We have ventured to contrast St. Augustine with St. Chrysostom, the first and second greatest preachers in the Christian world. St. Augustine tells about the sinfulness of his early life, nor do any of his biographers attempt to conceal it; whereas, with the

exception of that want of straightforwardness which has been already mentioned, I know no biographer of St. Chrysostom who charges him with a single sin or grievous fault. While he knew from *observation* the wickedness of a rich, populous, and luxurious city, his soul loathed the guilt; and his eagerness for an ascetic life, and the self-denial even from what was lawful, was with him, as with many other Christians, the violent reaction in the mind which leads people, in their horror and dread of what they disapprove, to endeavour to keep so far from sin that they go to the opposite extreme. Antioch was a city which combined the intellectual splendour and the appreciation of the refinements of Art with all the sensual luxury which the riches of a military and commercial centre could produce. It was a place where intellect was put to the worst of all uses, when it was debased to minister to sensual pleasure, glossed over, as at the Grove of Daphne, with the pretext of religious worship. Yet *there* God had His own children, and the Lord Jesus owned some of His most devoted followers: nor can we ever forget, in thinking of St. Chrysostom's birth-place, that it was the second cradle of our holy religion. Not only the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch, but from there the first missionaries to Europe were sent by a command from heaven. "Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch,

and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them" (Acts xiii. 1, 2). St. Chrysostom loved his native place. The people had the warmth of all his affection, his glittering eloquence was poured forth like a golden stream for their souls' wealth; but he spared none of their faults, and the one object of his preaching was to persuade them that the love and service of God could alone give them happiness and peace. His preaching seemed ever to turn on practical subjects and the desire to influence the lives of his hearers.

Many persons are of opinion that the sphere of preaching as an influence in the Church and world has passed away with the invention of printing and the ever-increasing circulation of the publications of the press; or else that it is now so limited in extent as to be undeserving of serious consideration. Nor can we pass over this question in studying "The Life and Times of St. Chrysostom," since it is as a preacher that he was best known in his lifetime, and that his memory was preserved after his death.

To those who think that the sphere of preaching has passed away, we would reply that it is a sphere quite distinct from that of printed publications, and so far from being destroyed by the invention of printing, in some respects it has actually been increased. The notices in the press which we see after great sermons have been preached, render the impression of the sermons more wide and lasting. They are talked of

by many who have not heard them spoken, and even the original hearers will read over with fresh pleasure what they know already. Besides this, the visible personality of the preacher counts for much. People will go to hear a famous speaker whether in the pulpit or on the platform. We may ask, Is it true that other public speakers outside churches are no longer listened to because their opinions may be read in print? Is it not the case in our own day that politicians have larger and more attentive audiences than at any previous period in history? It is also in accordance with our nature that the impression from audible speech is greater than from printed matter, which appeals only to the eye. The speaker himself feels his energies called forth by the sight of an attentive audience, and what he does address to them will be more powerful, and even will be afterwards read with greater pleasure, than what he merely penned in the seclusion of his library. And with regard to preaching, we may add to all these human elements of influence, that there is a Divine blessing promised to faithful preaching—"It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching (that which men call foolishness) to save them that believe." We may therefore study the Homilies of St. Chrysostom without feeling that our study is useless, or that the power of preaching for good has passed away.

The greatness of St. Chrysostom as a preacher may be partly inferred from the very fact that the name "Chrysostom," or "golden-mouthed," given to him on

account of his matchless eloquence, has so entirely taken the place of his original name of John, that we rarely now even recognise him under any but his adopted name. Another remarkable proof of his power as a preacher is that his greatness was exhibited in his native city of Antioch. Remembering our Lord's words that a prophet has no honour in his own country, we must acknowledge that to overcome the prejudice against a man, so often found among his own friends and neighbours, who think, before they have heard him at all, that they know all that he has to tell, shows no common greatness. We may add to this that St. Chrysostom preached for successive years to the same congregation, a test of popularity which few even of the greatest modern preachers have been able to bear. When we hear of the crowds which attend the services conducted by Mission Preachers, we are often tempted to ask, What would be their success if they preached in the same place eight years instead of eight days? The final testimony to the greatness of St. Chrysostom as a preacher is that he set an example of what Christian sermons might be, which has been followed with success ever since; and when in our own Church at the Reformation the office of *preaching* was restored to its position of importance, the very name Homilies, which had been originally applied to the sermons of St. Chrysostom, became the name of the various volumes of sermons published for use in the Church of England. As might be expected, the references in the English Homilies to St. Chrysostom

are full and frequent, and we have to look no further than the very first to find a quotation from "the great clerk and godly preacher St. John Chrysostom," as he is there called.

What was the *secret* of the wonderful power and success of this great preacher? There may be things which we cannot now tell, such as his voice, his appearance, and his manner in the pulpit; but as his sermons have been preserved, some of them from his own writing, others taken down by the hearers or by notaries, we can tell even by the written records the depth and earnestness of these discourses, the serious purpose of the preacher, his affection for the congregation which he addressed, even when he pointed out their faults. In his treatise on the Priesthood, when speaking about sermons, he does not omit to say that most people are accustomed to listen for pleasure, not for profit, and that preachers should be aware of this fact. But the most prominent feature of the Homilies of St. Chrysostom is the profound knowledge of Scripture and the close observation of human life which they display.

In his early days, as St. Chrysostom acknowledges, he was attracted to the theatre and to the law courts, as exhibiting a panorama of human life. When he gave up such worldly scenes, the whole city of Antioch formed to him one vast theatre, with the difference that all the scenes were real; the industry, the suffering, the sins, the sorrows of the great city were all spread before his observant eye

and sympathetic heart. To labour there for the good of his fellow-citizens, to reform their lives, to give them a hope in the world to come, and to bring them to Christ, was the great object of his life. As an example of the comfort which he offered to those in distress, we may quote the following passage about the loneliness of widowhood, where we can imagine, as we read it, that he was thinking of his own mother. It is in one of the Homilies on the First Epistle to the Thessalonians, where the Apostle tells us that we should sorrow not as others who have no hope—"Thou art separated from thy husband, but art united to God. Thou hast not a fellow-servant for thy associate, but thou hast thy Lord. When thou prayest, tell me, dost thou not converse with God? When thou readest, hear Him conversing with thee. And what does He say to thee? Much kinder words than thy husband, for though indeed thy husband should comfort thee, the honour is not great, for he is thy fellow-servant. But when thy Lord comforts the slave then is the courtship great. How then does He court us? Hear by what means He does it. 'Come,' He says, 'unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' Of how great a love are these words; and again, 'Turn unto Me, and ye shall be saved.'"

Nor should we forget, in trying to explain the interest which St. Chrysostom's discourses always excited in the minds of his hearers, that he laid bare his own experience. He spoke to the people as one

who was their friend, and who had nothing in his past life that he was ashamed to tell. One of the most remarkable of these experiences refers to the providential care which God had exercised over his own life. When he was a young man, before his ordination, walking with a friend to a favourite spot near the tomb of the Martyr Babylas, in the beautiful gardens on the bank of the Orontes, they saw what appeared like the leaves of a book floating on the river. As most persons under such circumstances would have done, they drew it out of the water, and found on the leaves some writing which looked like a magic incantation. It so happened that the Eastern division of the Roman Empire at that time was ruled over by a suspicious, jealous tyrant, named Valens, who, in his dread of magicians, had given strict orders that all who dealt in magic arts should be put to death. Chrysostom and his friend at once realised the danger they were in if, even by a mere accident, they were found in possession of a magic incantation, and their dread was increased when they observed at a short distance a soldier watching them.

To keep the book was dangerous, and to throw it away was still more dangerous. They chose, however, the latter alternative, and, to their surprise and relief, they were allowed by the soldier to continue their walk unmolested. This incident is related by St. Chrysostom himself, when preaching many years afterwards on a passage in the Acts of the Apostles, and referring to God's providence watching over us. "Not only," he

says, "ought we to thank God in general for His goodness, but if any of us have a special providence to call to mind, we ought not to forget publicly to acknowledge God's goodness, and this habit," he adds, "helps to keep up the feeling that God is our friend and benefactor."

After St. Chrysostom's fame as a preacher had begun to attract attention in Antioch, circumstances occurred which made the impression of his oratorical power extend throughout the whole city and the neighbouring provinces. The people of Antioch were exasperated against the Emperor Theodosius for the imposition of a new tax which they thought arbitrary and unfair. An excited crowd threw down the statues of the Emperor and his deceased wife, and dragged them about the streets. This violent and disrespectful conduct filled the Emperor with just indignation, and he threatened the people of Antioch with a punishment far worse than their folly deserved. Not only were some of the rioters put to death at once, but the whole city was threatened with destruction and the exile of the inhabitants.

The Bishop of Antioch hastened to Constantinople to appeal to the Emperor's clemency, and the neighbouring city of Seleucia sent a deputation to plead for mercy. Communication being slow, and such a matter one that could not be decided in haste, the people of Antioch were kept in suspense for more than a month —from the end of February till Easter. All public resorts and places of amusement were closed, and the people in their awful suspense flocked to the churches,

especially the Cathedral Church, at which St. Chrysostom during the absence of the Bishop was the chief and almost the only preacher. His efforts to give the people patience and hope, to calm their feelings, to exhort them while the event was uncertain to reform their lives, to turn to God in penitence and submit to His will, called forth the highest ability of the Christian orator. These are commonly called the Homilies on the Statues, from the occasion which called them forth.[1]

From the sixth of these Homilies we may quote the following passage, which will show the spirit in which he asked his hearers to bear this fearful trial—"Oh that I did endure the peril *for God*, says some one, then I should have no anxiety; but do not even now sink into despondency, for not only is he well approved who suffers in the cause of God, but he who is suffering anything unjustly, and bearing it nobly and giving thanks to God who permits it, is not inferior to him who sustains these trials for God's sake."

Just before Easter that year the news reached Antioch that the Emperor had pardoned the people, and the Easter sermon of St. Chrysostom completed this wonderful series with an exalted thanksgiving to Almighty God, who had rescued from such imminent peril.

After the fame of St. Chrysostom as a preacher had reached its height in Antioch, two events happened in no way connected with him, but which influenced the rest of his life and the history of the Christian Church.

[1] Vol. v. p. 98, in the edition referred to in the Appendix.

The first was in the year 395, the death of Theodosius the Great, the last ruler of the united Roman Empire, which was henceforth divided into East and West under his two sons Arcadius and Honorius and their successors. Division was the same as weakness and inability to withstand foreign invasion. Arcadius, who reigned but did not rule at Constantinople, was entirely under the control of his beautiful and imperious wife Eudoxia, whose influence was soon felt in the Church. The other event which followed soon after was the death of the somewhat indolent and pleasure-loving Nectarius, Patriarch of Constantinople. Thus was the way opened for St. Chrysostom to attain the height of honour and the depth of suffering by which his life was marked without any seeking on his part.

The fame of St. Chrysostom as a preacher had ere this reached the Eastern capital, and now when the See of Constantinople was vacant, he was chosen to be Patriarch through the recommendation of Eutropius, one of the officials of the Court, who, when returning from Syria on some Imperial business, had passed through Antioch, and himself had heard the matchless eloquence of the great preacher. Some deceit was practised on St. Chrysostom, which may have caused him some pungent reflections on his former advocacy of the economy of truth. The Imperial Commissioner who was sent from Constantinople to Antioch to bring St. Chrysostom back with him, fearing a double danger, that the nominee should be unwilling to accept the appointment, and the people object to part with

their beloved pastor, halted outside the city, and sent for the preacher to meet him to confer on important business. St. Chrysostom went out, and was then and there told of the high honour which awaited him, and he was at once taken with an armed escort to Constantinople. He thought it more dignified and more useful to submit to honour, as he did afterwards to exile, without resistance and without complaint. It may easily be imagined that this eagerness to secure St. Chrysostom as Patriarch was not from any want of aspirants to the Bishopric of the greatest and most beautiful of Christian cities, the new Rome, which had everything that the old Rome possessed, and, in addition, what old Rome wanted, one of the most magnificent harbours in the world. The disappointed candidates were not inclined to make the path of St. Chrysostom an easy one; in particular, Theophilus, Bishop of Alexandria, had hoped that a friend of his own, named Isidorus, would have been appointed, and it added to the annoyance of the Alexandrian Patriarch that he was himself ordered by the Emperor to assist at the consecration of St. Chrysostom. This Theophilus is chiefly remembered in Church history for characteristics unworthy of a bishop or of a Christian at all. His delight in intrigue and underhand proceedings had been exhibited some time previously when there had been a civil war in the Western part of the Roman Empire between Theodosius and Maximus, and while the result was yet uncertain, and Theophilus was anxious to in-

gratiate himself with the conqueror; he sent his friend to Italy with two letters and two presents, one addressed to each of the rivals, one to be given to whichever of the two succeeded to the Imperial dignity, and the other to be kept strictly secret. Like most underhand proceedings, the whole plan was discovered, and when Theophilus expressed his unwillingness to consecrate St. Chrysostom, he was told plainly that his past intrigues were known at the Court, and a threat was held over him, that if he refused to comply with the Emperor's wishes he would be prosecuted for his former proceedings. Theophilus thereupon consented to officiate at the consecration, although his hostility to St. Chrysostom remained unabated.

The new Patriarch of Constantinople attracted as much attention by his sermons there as he had formerly done at Antioch. His preaching, if possible, rose to a higher level. It was marked by more profound thought, theological depth, and pungency of style. Some may be inclined to ask, culling their phraseology from modern growth, Did St. Chrysostom preach Evangelical doctrine? Put the words teaching of the Gospel for Evangelical doctrine, and the question will disappear, as it will answer itself, and we shall have reason to wonder that it ever was asked, and how the duty of the whole Church could be supposed to be the badge of a part. A Church which did not teach the Gospel would be false to her trust. It is of special note that his labours included that missionary

zeal to which we now attach so much importance, not only as a duty to the heathen, but as a sign of life in the Church itself. Observing that many of the Goths who were even then flocking into the Roman Empire were inaccessible to the ordinary ministrations of the Church on account of their language, St. Chrysostom ordained a number of presbyters, deacons, and readers who understood the Gothic tongue, and appointed one church for them, as Theodoret tells us in his Church History. Even more remarkable was his willingness and success in going into Thrace when all others were afraid to confer with Gainas the Goth, a leader of robber bands who were the terror of the neighbourhood; of which interview Theodoret writes,[1] "Thus was virtue able to abash and confound even the most hardened," reminding us of the sentiment expressed by Milton describing how Satan shrank from the presence of the good Angel, "And felt how awful goodness is."

The ascetic tastes of St. Chrysostom still continued untouched by the pride and luxury of the Court, and likewise of many of the clergy, which, instead of attracting him, aroused his wrath. He would not entertain in the sumptuous manner of his predecessors, and he sold the episcopal plate to give the proceeds in charity. In his sermons, on every favourable opportunity, he was unsparing in his rebuke of the prevailing luxury. In particular, the Empress Eudoxia felt that many of the sternest condemnations were

[1] Book v. chap. 32.

aimed at her own life. At one time it was not hard to see that the description of Jezebel in the preacher's sermon corresponded to the Empress herself; and at another, unfortunately for the preacher, as his own Christian name was John, one of his most eloquent sermons began with the words,[1] "Again Herodias rages, again she is troubled, again she seeks to take the head of John on a charger."

For a time, however, St. Chrysostom was so popular with the poorer classes that it would have been dangerous for the Court to interfere with him. But soon after, a controversy which arose at first in Egypt, in the diocese of Theophilus, unexpectedly provided the opportunity for which the enemies of St. Chrysostom had long been seeking. Some monks in the neighbourhood of Alexandria had offended Theophilus by adopting the opinions of Origen, and in order to avoid the wrath of the Bishop they fled to Constantinople and placed themselves under the protection of St. Chrysostom. These opinions of Origen would afford subject for a lecture by themselves. Suffice it, therefore, to say, that his mystical and allegorical interpretations of Scripture had for three or four centuries the same sort of fascination for many minds that the so-called Higher Criticism has in our own day; and what was called by the convenient name of Origenism was in reality a question about the interpretation of Scripture.

Theophilus had now got a twofold charge against

[1] Socrates vi. 16, p. 725.

the man whom he had long sought to undermine. The first was that the Bishop of another diocese had afforded refuge to those who disobeyed the wishes of their own; and the second was even more serious, although even more untrue, that Chrysostom himself sympathised with the unorthodox views concerning Holy Scripture. In reality the mind of the great preacher was averse to anything mystical or allegorical. Every subject upon which he spoke was viewed as important in proportion as it was awful and profound truth, and his interest in the exiled monks was merely a sympathy which he felt for those whom he considered to be unjustly banished. Theophilus, however, laid these charges which he made against St. Chrysostom at the Imperial Court, and the Empress, whose influence over her husband was unbounded, overjoyed at such an opportunity, invited Theophilus to Constantinople to preside over a council to inquire into the opinions and conduct of St. Chrysostom. The council was held at a villa called The Oak, a convenient distance from the capital.

With such a judge and such a court, it is not wonderful, although it is sad to read, that St. Chrysostom was deprived of his office and sentenced to banishment. The people were at first so indignant that they prevented the carrying out of this unjust sentence; but after some delay he was taken into exile, where, after being exposed for three years to the greatest hardship and privation, he died among the mountains of Asia Minor at the comparatively

early age of sixty. Truly, when we read of these scenes in Church history, we may thank God that our own lot has been cast in a more tolerant age. Toleration may indeed cause division and separation, because it allows men to take their own way; but however great be the evils of division, they cannot be compared with the evils of persecution.

We may add with thankfulness that the exile was not without friends. The Bishop of Rome, laying aside the natural jealousy of the See of Constantinople, wrote to him, and, on his behalf, to the clergy of Constantinople. Even the sympathy of a woman's heart was not denied him to compensate for the bitter hostility of Eudoxia. His letters to the Deaconess Olympias at this period are the most affecting materials for the latter part of his history. They form no less than seventeen out of the very numerous collection of two hundred and forty-two which still remain. He addresses the letters to "My Lady the revered and devout Deaconess Olympias, whom John the Bishop salutes in the Lord." The first three letters are full of references to the Bible for comfort and exhortation; they are more like treatises than letters, such a style as a man used to preaching and now forced to correspond would naturally adopt. With the fourth of the series begins what we should call the epistolary style, being much briefer, with more personal details and individual feeling. He tells her about the fierceness of the storm, his own ill health, the attacks of the Isaurian robbers, the

country of Armenia, his missionary labours for the sake of the Goths, about Cucusus with its neighbouring fortress Arabissus, which had been chosen as the place of his banishment, a most lonely and dangerous place infested by robbers; and among these outpourings of his heart he adds the touching remark that he would judge by her letters to him whether his to her did any good in relieving her sorrow, and, if so, he would write oftener.

After St. Chrysostom had been nearly three years at Cucusus, he was sentenced to be carried to a still more remote and desolate place called Pityus, on the shores of the Black Sea, apparently in order to make it more difficult for him to correspond with his friends. He did not live to reach the end of the journey, but expired on the way at Comana, being exhausted by the journey in his feeble state of health. All his unjust sufferings he endured with patience and resignation, and almost his last words were "Glory be to God for all things." A year later, after the deaths of Eudoxia and Arcadius, under a new Emperor, Theodosius the Second, the earthly remains of the exile were brought back from Comana to Constantinople. Crowds awaited the vessel at the landing-place, and, as the coffin was carried on shore, the Emperor, himself bending over it, prayed that the sin of his father and mother might be forgiven.

We make no apology for dwelling so much on the character of the illustrious preacher, believing, as we do, that a man's character is the expression of his

life; that which prompts his actions, and that which will remain after his actions in this world have been forgotten, and which will give birth to fresh activities in larger spheres in the world to come. I have read and listened to the strong and almost angry tones in which an inquiry into the life and character of literary genius has been deprecated, and the natural wish to compare a man's writings with his life, stigmatised as unfair. Herein we can see how the Divine method is the opposite to the human. Our Lord chose to be known by His life and character, and trusted others to tell it. The Saviour wrote no book, though His life gave rise to many. Writers might select or omit, but they could find no evil or folly to record, not even the ingenuity of malice could utterly distort the narrative, though all the facts were open and public. This is the example to show us both what we should aim at, and how infinitely we fall short of it. His own words were, "I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the Temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing."

I can imagine that some when they have reached this point will ask inwardly as they listen, Is this history or is it fiction? Is it romance or reality? The old days of heathenism in Antioch still surviving, when Secundus, a Roman officer, was stationed there; his marriage with a Greek lady Authensa; the birth of their little child; the early death of the father and the long widowhood of the mother; the school and college

days of the young John (not yet called the "golden-mouthed"); his teachers, his companions, their loves and their friendships, their walks by the banks of the Orontes, and communings of soul with soul; the troubles of the Roman Empire, and the influence of the State upon the Church; the glorious career of the Christian orator; the exalted station to which he was called, in which he retained his severe simplicity of character; his unjust banishment, and his lonely death in a strange land,—where can we find and read these things for ourselves?

I can imagine that some hearers may wish for more certainty, and others for more information, on the life and times of St. Chrysostom than it is possible to give in a single lecture, and would like to know where the original authorities for that history are to be found. First and foremost we must place his own works; for although in no case he wrote what would be called history or biography, yet his writings relate many scenes in his own life, as well as describing persons and places conspicuous at the time. Next to his own writings we place a sort of biography by Palladius, written in the form of a dialogue between Palladius himself—a friend and pupil of St. Chrysostom—and Theodorus, a deacon of the Church of Rome. As of most ancient writings, the authorship has been called in question, though apparently without sufficient reason. Palladius was an enthusiastic admirer of his tutor, and had himself suffered in the persecution which descended upon all who took the part of the banished man. The

Greek text has been found in a manuscript of the seventh century in the Medicean Library in Florence, and a Latin translation is prefixed to some copies of the works of St. Chrysostom. Next to Palladius we may place the Greek Church historians, three of whom—Socrates, Theodoret, and Sozomen—have related very fully the history of his time. Among modern writers we may give the first place to Neander, though of course no modern writer can be called an authority in the same sense as those already mentioned.

We would not close our review of the life and times of St. Chrysostom with this sad account of his banishment and early death, but give a short notice of another sphere of Christian work in which he was only surpassed by his Christian eloquence. It is an old remark that preaching to be effective must be preceded by prayer, and it is only because the fame of St. Chrysostom as a preacher is so great that his fame as a compiler of a Liturgy is somewhat overshadowed; yet this Liturgy would of itself be sufficient to mark him out as one of the greatest of the Christian Fathers. It is used to this day by the Greek Church, and has been reprinted in Constantinople in 1875, besides being published with the earlier editions of the works of the Patriarch. I would not aver, by quoting from it as the Liturgy of St. Chrysostom, that every part must have been written by him. Liturgies, like our own Prayer-Book, have been enlarged by successive

generations; but it appears most uncritical to judge the date of a work by the latest addition. The oldest Christian liturgical form, namely, the Lord's Prayer, has been added to since it left the lips of its Divine Author; but what should we think of the criticism which attempted to decide the date and authorship of the Lord's Prayer by seeking for the origin of the doxology? The Liturgy of St. Chrysostom was particularly studied at the time of the Reformation, and translated into Latin by Erasmus, and suggested many hints to the compilers of our own Liturgy. It did not escape the notice of the Reformers that an Apostolic Church more ancient than the Church of Rome, and possessing uninterrupted continuity, had never acknowledged her claims to supremacy. The sympathetic interest towards the Greek Church shown by English theologians is evidenced by the insertion in our Prayer-Book of the Prayer of St. Chrysostom, as well as by omitting the Church of Constantinople from the list of those which had erred, not only in their living and manner of ceremonies, but also in matters of faith. Many other resemblances, both in constitution and worship, may be traced between the Church of England and the Church of Constantinople. The Liturgy of our Church is by no means a free translation of the Use of Sarum. It is much more Catholic in what it admits, and much more authoritative in what it excludes, than such a theory imagines. So far from losing her Catholicity by her Protest

against the false claims of the Church of Rome, in reality the Church of England became much more Catholic at the Reformation.

It is not too much to say that the renown of the Greek Church for centuries rests upon the preaching and prayer and the holy life of St. Chrysostom. To those who, like ourselves, admire his character without attempting to conceal his faults, or to assert that in every case his discretion was equal to his purity; to those whose interest in his wonderful career has been excited by hearing this Lecture, and yet who have not time to follow out the subject in their own reading, and who, even if they had the time, could hardly find access to the volumes in the libraries where the history is contained—we would say, study the Prayer of St. Chrysostom. It is a perfect gem set into our Prayer-Book, and the diligent search and exhaustive study of our English divines could have found no better specimen of the genius and holiness of that wonderful man.

The English version cannot be called a literal translation, yet it is sufficiently accurate to convey the spirit of the original. It is remarkable as a prayer to Christ, though in the Greek Liturgy this is implied rather than expressed. We address our Lord as "Almighty God," and because it is a prayer to Christ it closes without the usual ending, "through Jesus Christ our Lord." The prayer is also remarkable for the prominent place it gives to the Grace of God, which must precede as well as accompany every

good work. Further, the prayer is marked by Scriptural language and an appeal to the Lord's promise, by a tremulousness of entreaty joined with submission to the Divine will, and finally by a deep and touching sympathy with the boundless aspirations of the human heart, which nothing but the infinite and eternal can satisfy. "Fulfil now, O Lord, the desires and petitions of Thy servants as may be most expedient for them, granting us in this world knowledge of Thy truth, and in the world to come life everlasting."

Dates for the Life of St. Chrysostom.

A.D.	
347.	His birth.
381.	Ordination as Deacon.
386.	Presbyter.
398.	Bishop.
403.	Exile.
407.	Death.

APPENDIX.

AUTHORITIES FOR THE LIFE AND TIMES OF ST. CHRYSOSTOM.

I.—*His own Works.* (Edition with Latin Translation, in 9 vols. folio. Paris, 1614.) In the Library of the Dean and Chapter of Norwich, G. 9–19.

Vol. I. Life by Palladius (in Latin). Some sermons (in Latin). Homilies on Genesis and some miscellaneous sermons.

„ II. "De Sacerdotio," various treatises and letters.

„ III. Homilies on the Psalms and Isaiah.

„ IV. Seventy-one sermons on different passages in the New Testament.

„ V. Homilies to the People of Antioch, also *against* the Jews, and on the incomprehensible nature of God.

„ VI. Seventy-three sermons on various subjects. (This volume is of a different edition, dated 1636.)

„ VII. Homilies on the New Testament—*St. Matthew*, *St. John*, and the *Acts*. (This volume is dated 1617, and the part on the Acts 1603.)

„ VIII. Homilies on the Epistles to the *Romans* and *Corinthians*. (This volume is dated 1603.)

Vol. IX. Homilies on the rest of the Epistles of *St. Paul*, *Galatians*, *Ephesians*, *Philippians*, *Colossians*, *Thessalonians*, *Timothy*, *Titus*, *Philemon*. (The rest of this volume is by a different author.)

The Homilies denoted by italics have been translated into English, and are published in "A Library of the Fathers," Oxford, 1843. (A copy is in the Library of the Dean and Chapter of Norwich.)

II.—*The Life of St. Chrysostom by Palladius* (prefixed to the above-mentioned edition of St. Chrysostom's Works).

III.—*The Greek Church Historians*—

Socrates, Book vi. chaps. ii.–xix.

Theodoret, Book v. chaps. xxvii.–xxxiv.

Sozomen, nearly all Book viii., but especially chaps. ii.–xxii. (In the Library of the Dean and Chapter of Norwich, C. F. 35, which volume contains also Eusebius, Theodorus, and Evagrius.)

Of modern writers, students will naturally study Gibbon and Neander, and the exhaustive treatise in Smith's "Christian Biography;" but no modern writers can be called "Authorities" in the same sense as the original writers.

Tertullian.

BY THE

REV. G. A. SCHNEIDER, M.A.

EXAMINING CHAPLAIN TO THE LORD BISHOP OF NEWCASTLE.

TERTULLIAN.

FIRST LECTURE.

"THE African nationality gave to Christianity its most eloquent defender. No influence in the early ages could equal that of Tertullian, and his writings breathe a spirit of such undying power that they can never grow old, and even now render living controversies which have been silent for fifteen centuries. . . . Never did a man more fully infuse his entire moral life into his books, and act through his words."[1]

It is in these terms that a recent writer speaks of Tertullian; and we shall readily allow that a peculiar interest attaches to this Christian Father—whether we consider the wide range of subjects which are dealt with in his writings, reflecting as these do the whole life of the Church of his day, her relation to the heathen power, her controversies with heretics, her worship and discipline, as well as the moral problems which confronted her — or whether we consider the great influence which Tertullian has exercised, since he was not only the first Latin Christian writer and the creator of ecclesiastical Latin, but also the first

[1] Pressensé, "The Early Years of Christianity," vol. ii. p. 375 (English translation).

representative of that form of theological thought which has been predominant in Western Christendom ever since. And scarcely of less interest is his personal character as it stands out on the pages of his books. We know very little concerning his outward history, but he has in a very marked manner impressed his personality upon his writings. We have in them the vivid portrait of a man with high qualities, but also with serious faults—full of devotion to the cause of Christianity, intensely in earnest, with great depth of conviction, with a keen intellect and a brilliant imagination—but impetuous and passionate, stern and rugged, lacking in moderation, inclined to push to an extreme whatever he was advocating, and hence one-sided and unfair to his opponents, for whom indeed he has nothing but scorn and contempt.

His literary activity covers a period of more than twenty years, and thus we are able, in a larger measure than is the case with most of the Fathers, to follow his mental development, the progress of his thoughts and opinions; and this adds not a little to the interest of a study of his works.

Quintus Septimius Florens Tertullianus was born in Africa about the middle of the second century. Jerome[1] tells us that his native city was Carthage, and that his father was a centurion in the service of the proconsul. He belonged accordingly to the middle class of society. It is evident from his writings that he received a good education. His reading in classical

[1] *Catalogus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum*, c. 53.

literature was extensive, if not profound. His works are a storehouse of antiquarian information of various kinds; he was well acquainted with the mythology, the history, the social and ritual customs, both of Greece and Rome. The poets also he read, though he had no taste to appreciate their beauty; and if he refers to them in his later years, it is generally in terms of reproach, because they have told ludicrous and unworthy stories about the gods. Nor did he neglect the writings of the philosophers, but he does not appear to have ever entered with any real sympathy into their teaching; while at a later time he comprehended all schools of philosophy alike under one sentence of condemnation. He was master of the Greek language; indeed, he wrote three treatises in it,[1] which, however, are not preserved to us.

For a profession he chose the practice of law. He became a pleader at the bar, and it would seem that his abilities gained for him a considerable reputation. Eusebius, in his "History of the Church,"[2] describes him as a man who had acquired a most accurate knowledge of Roman law; and even if we had not this express testimony, we should have abundant proof of the fact from his own writings. His language abounds in legal terminology; the very conception of one of his treatises, that on the "Prescription of Heretics," is derived from a usage of the law-courts; and (what is chiefly noticeable) in his mode of controversy he con-

[1] See *de Baptismo*, c. 15; *de Corona Militis*, c. 6; *de Virginibus Velandis*, c. 1.

[2] Book ii. c. 2.

stantly betrays the former advocate. Whether he is defending the cause of Christianity against the heathen power, or whether he comes forward as the champion of orthodoxy against heretics, or whether he is advocating a stricter morality against those who are lax and worldly inside the Church, it is always as a special pleader that he speaks. He has nothing of the calm, judicial spirit which will be just to the standpoint of an opponent. The cause of whose truth he is convinced is to him as lightest day; everything opposed to it is as darkest night. He brings together all the arguments which will help his cause, not even pausing to consider whether they are valid; and these he presses to their furthest consequences, not sparing wit and sarcasm, till he drives his opponent off the field, and makes him appear foolish and contemptible.

During the earlier part of his life Tertullian was a heathen. Carthage, one of the largest cities in the Roman Empire, was also one of the most morally corrupt, and Tertullian yielded fully to the evil influences around him. He speaks in several passages of the sins of his youth. "We also were formerly blind, without the light of the Lord,"[1] he says in his treatise "on Repentance;" and in another place of the same book he acknowledges that he has "a pre-eminence in sin."[2] Elsewhere[3] he tells us, almost with a shudder, how he had witnessed, and had been amused at, the shocking cruelties of the amphitheatre; and he remarks: "No

[1] *De Pœnitentia*, c. 1. [2] Ibid. c. 4.
[3] *Apologeticus*, c. 15; *de Spectaculis*, c. 19.

one is able to describe these shows more fully than I am, unless it be one who is still in the habit of visiting them. But I would rather leave the description incomplete than recall the memories of the past."

The teaching of Christianity was not unknown to him at the time, but he regarded it only with aversion or contempt. When at a later period of his life he set forth for heathen readers the Christian doctrines of One God, the Creator and Preserver of the Universe, of His Revelation of Himself in the Scriptures, of the Resurrection of the Dead, and the future Judgement, he added: "We also once made merry over these doctrines. We are of your stock. Men become Christians: they are not born as such."[1]

But, for all that, the great step was taken—the scoffer became a Christian. We are not told what it was that effected his conversion. We may, however, be sure of this at least, that his experience was not that of a Justin Martyr: it was not philosophy that brought him to Christ. Nor was it the study of the Bible, for he tells us expressly that no one reads the Bible, unless he is already a Christian.[2] It has been well remarked[3] that ardent, passionate natures are not to be persuaded by reasoning, they must be overwhelmed by facts; and Tertullian does tell us of facts by which many persons were led to embrace Christianity, namely, the patience and heroism of the Christian martyrs. His words are

[1] *Apologeticus*, c. 18. [2] *De Testimonio Animæ*, c. 1.
[3] Hauck, *Tertullian's Leben und Schriften*, p. 5.

worth quoting: "Many of your pagan writers exhort men to endure pain and death; and yet their words do not gain so many disciples as the Christians gain when they teach by deeds. . . . That very obstinacy which you blame is a teacher; for who that contemplates it is not impelled to inquire what influence underlies it? And who, after he has inquired, does not join us?"[1] And again he says: "Every one who witnesses this patient endurance of the martyrs is struck with misgiving; he is kindled with desire to ascertain whence it arises; and as soon as he has come to know the truth, forthwith he follows it himself."[2] It may well be the case that Tertullian is here thinking of the circumstances which brought about his own conversion. Probably there was also another influence at work, a secret uneasiness of conscience. When he afterwards appealed to the human soul as bearing a spontaneous witness to Christ, and when he pointed to the soul's natural fear of God, its dread of death, its expectation of a future judgment, as attesting the truth of Christianity,[3] we shall scarcely be mistaken, if we see in this too a reflection of his own spiritual history.

His accession to Christianity was apparently a sudden, but it was also a decisive, step. He embraced the Christian faith with all the ardour and energy of his nature: it became the guiding principle of his life. With the past he broke completely; he

[1] *Apologeticus*, c. 50. [2] *Ad Scapulam*, c. 5.
[3] *De Testimonio Animæ*, c. 2.

could think of it only with aversion and hatred. Christian or pagan?—this was the question which he applied henceforth to everything. His life was to be one long struggle against paganism in every form —against paganism outside the Church, with its idolatrous worship and its infamous amusements; and no less against paganism inside the Church, when either pagan forms of thought blending with Christian views of truth produced heresy, or when worldliness and a lower standard of morality tended to corrupt the purity and the lofty asceticism of Christian life. His career is one long struggle against all this, and it is with him a war to the death.

But, if his conversion to Christianity brought about a decisive change in the whole bent of his life, it did not, on the other hand, transform his personal character. There are some natures in whom whatever is rugged and harsh becomes softened when they yield themselves to the service of Christ. Tertullian's was not one of these. A new spirit dwelt indeed within him, but the vessel which contained that spirit remained old. He still continued a typical representative of the Carthaginian character—fiery and impetuous, earnest and zealous, but fanatical, inclined to exaggerations, harsh and vindictive, sarcastic, unmerciful to his opponents. And as he grew older, these characteristics, so far from disappearing, came more and more into prominence. Hence there is not a little in him that repels.

Tertullian, on his conversion, would find a large

body of fellow-Christians. The Roman province of Africa (corresponding roughly to the modern Tunis) appears to have received the Gospel from Italy early in the second century, and it proved a soil in which the seed sprang up quickly. Large numbers of converts had joined, not only from the towns, but also from the country districts. It was in Africa too that the earliest translation of the New Testament into Latin was made, about the middle of the second century. The Christian community had already drawn upon themselves the attention of the pagans, and had gone through the fire of persecution.

A man of Tertullian's powers would soon become a leader in his Church, and we have it on the authority of Jerome[1] that Tertullian was raised to the office of presbyter. We do not know the date of his ordination, nor do we even know at what place he exercised his ministry. Some have thought that it was at Rome; but, though Tertullian tells us that he had been at Rome,[2] it is more likely that Carthage, his native city, was the scene of his ministerial labours. At any rate several of his writings were produced at Carthage,[3] which suggests that this city continued to be his usual place of residence.

He now began to develop a considerable literary activity. His writings probably fall within the period from 190 to 220 A.D. He was already approaching

[1] *Catalogus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum*, c. 53.
[2] *De Cultu Feminarum*, i. c. 7.
[3] See *Apologeticus*, c. 9; *de Pallio*, c. 1.

middle life when he began to write, and accordingly he comes before us, even in his earliest works, as a man of matured character and thought. As we have already remarked, the range of subjects with which he deals is very wide: well-nigh every topic is discussed which interested the Churchmen of his day; every movement is reflected which touched either the outward existence and safety of the Church, or the purity of her doctrine, or her moral life. And, for all that, Tertullian never occupied himself with far-fetched or useless subjects. In each treatise he had some immediate practical purpose in view; each was called forth by a need that was actually felt.

One of his earliest works is his treatise *de Spectaculis*, "on the Theatrical Shows." This gives a graphic picture of the social life of the age, and it also serves well to illustrate Tertullian's own standpoint. It may therefore be of interest to describe the work more fully. As the title implies, it discusses the question whether Christians may frequent the public shows in the circus and the theatre. Underlying this is the larger question—which confronts Christians in every age—how far a Christian may, without violating his Christian principles, take part in the occupations and amusements of the world. From early times onwards, two views, opposed to each other, have been held in the Church. One of these would sternly reject whatever is not distinctively Christian; the other would appropriate what it finds outside Christianity, and would then endeavour to ennoble and purify it.

Each tendency has its legitimate place; each also will lead men into error when it is pushed too far. That Tertullian was an ardent champion of the former view will not surprise us. And indeed, so far as the theatrical exhibitions of that age were concerned, an enlightened conscience could not have judged otherwise than that Christians should hold aloof from them altogether. Even among the pagans voices had been raised against these shows on account of the lavish expenditure and the waste of time which they involved, while Christian writers of the second century had been unanimous in condemning them, because they were scenes of cruel butchery and slaughter, and were tainted with impure associations. But there does not appear to have been any universal agreement among Christians as to their line of conduct in this matter. Some Christians, even women,[1] visited the places of amusement. The shows, provided in many cases by the government to gratify the populace, and performed with much pomp and splendour, had a very strong hold on men's minds; and it was difficult for the weaker Christians to run counter to an almost universal tendency of the time, and to separate themselves from their heathen friends and neighbours. They would plead that there was no express commandment in Scripture against visiting the spectacles,[2] and that it was not reasonable that Christians should be deprived of all amusements. Or it was urged that the constituent elements in the public shows, such as bodily strength, the musical

[1] *De Spectaculis*, c. 26. [2] Ibid. c. 3.

voice, the horse and the lion, were created by God; was it not right then to use and enjoy His good gifts?[1]

In view of such opinions, Tertullian felt it his duty to write this treatise. He addresses it both to baptized Christians and to candidates for baptism; the latter more particularly he seems anxious to warn and to preserve from evil. It is characteristic of his standpoint that his main line of argument is to prove by historical research that the shows had their origin in heathen worship and superstitions. Of the waste of time and money he says nothing. Even the cruelty and the demoralising effect upon the spectators, though they are mentioned, occupy only the second place in his argument. His chief plea is this: All these spectacles are closely bound up with idolatrous rites; hence they should be abhorrent to men who have renounced idolatry.

In the opening chapter he sums up the purport of the whole treatise. "We are ready to prove most particularly that these things, namely the pleasures of the shows, are not compatible with true religion and with true obedience to the true God." To the plea that the elements of the shows were created by God, and are therefore good, he replies by pointing out the all-important distinction between the right use and the wrong use of God's gifts. "The gold, brass, silver, wood, and other materials which are employed in making idols—who has placed these in the world except God, the Creator of the world? But was it in order

[1] *De Spectaculis*, c. 2.

that these things should be worshipped instead of Himself? . . . If God hates every form of malignity, and hates such wicked reasonings as these, it is clear without a doubt that, of all things which He has made, He has made none to issue in works which He condemns." To the Christians who asked for a verse from Scripture in which plays were prohibited, Tertullian quotes the first Psalm: "Blessed is the man who hath not gone into the assembly of the ungodly, nor stood in the way of sinners, nor sat in the seat of the scornful." He lays greater stress, however, on the baptismal vow. "When we enter the baptismal water and make profession of the Christian faith, we testify that we have renounced the devil with his pomp and his angels." In other words, we have renounced idolatry. Now the shows are idolatrous, and therefore they are included in what we have renounced. He then proceeds to prove his statement that the shows have originated with idolatry. Not a little antiquarian research was needed here, for the early associations of the plays had in many cases been forgotten. But Tertullian passes in review the various kinds of spectacles—those of the circus, the theatre, the race-course, the amphitheater. The theatres were at first temples of Venus, and the plays performed there still begin with processions from the temples and altars to the stage. As to the amphitheatre, the cruelties practised there—the struggles with wild beasts, the contests of the gladiators—were once connected with offerings to the dead. "Formerly, because it was

believed that the souls of the departed were appeased by human blood, men were wont to buy captives or slaves of evil disposition, and to sacrifice them in the funeral obsequies. Afterwards it pleased them to cover their iniquity with a veil of pleasure." The Christians can have nothing to do with pagan altars, nor can they offer oblations to the dead. Having thus dealt with the religious aspect of the question, Tertullian comes to its moral aspect. Visits to these spectacles produce a state of mind very different from that which is appropriate to the Christian. "God has commanded us to act with tranquillity, and gentleness, and quiet, and peace towards the Holy Spirit, who is, in accordance with the goodness of His nature, tender and sensitive; and not to vex Him with passion, and rage, and anger, and agitation. . . . And there can be no show without excitement." Tertullian then gives a vivid sketch of the excitement connected with the games in the circus—the crowds thronging thither, the eager watching for the signal, the mad shouts, the betting, the reproaches and curses without any just cause, the applause when there is nothing to merit it. How can a Christian join in these things? Fury and madness and dissension are not lawful for those who are "priests of peace."

The impurity of the stage is next touched upon, and afterwards the cruelty of the amphitheatre. Even though those who are slaughtered are criminals judicially sentenced, "still the good man can find no pleasure in seeing another suffer. He should rather mourn

that a man like himself has incurred such guilt as to suffer so cruel a punishment. And who is to guarantee," he continues, "that it is always the guilty who are adjudged to the wild beasts, or to some other doom?" He then turns with indignation to those who sought to justify their attendance by pleading that God Himself looked on the shows without being defiled by them. "Yes," he says, "God does look down, but as Judge. He looks on robberies too, He looks on falsehoods, and adulteries, and frauds, and idolatries, and on the shows themselves; and on that very account we will not look on, lest He, the all-seeing, behold us." And then Tertullian emphasises the great truth that the Christian is subject to an unchangeable rule of moral conduct. "In no place, and at no time, is that excused which God condemns. In no place, and at no time, is that allowed which is not allowed in every place and at all times." The Christian who frequents these shows is as one who has deserted his standard and gone over to the enemy's camp. "Finding himself in a place where there is nothing of God, will he be thinking of God? Will the man have peace in his soul who is contending for the charioteer? . . . While the tragedian is declaiming, will he recall the words of a prophet? How strange it is to go from God's church to the devil's church! to weary those hands which you have been lifting up to God, by applauding an actor! out of the mouth from which you have said Amen over the holy thing, to bear witness in favour of a gladiator!" One more reason he urges

against taking part in the spectacles. It is in these assemblies that the cry "to the lions" is continually raised against the Christians; it is thence that persecutions have gone forth. But, it is objected, is the Christian to have no enjoyment in life? "Are you so ungrateful," answers Tertullian, "as not to deem sufficient, and not to acknowledge thankfully, the many great joys which God has given you? For what is more delightful than to have peace with God our Father and our Lord, and to have a revelation of the truth, and a knowledge of error, and pardon for our great sins of the past? What greater pleasure is there than to scorn pleasure, to despise the whole world, to possess true liberty and a clear conscience, to have no fear of death, to tread under foot the gods of the nations, to cast out demons, to perform cures, to seek for Divine revelations, to live unto God? These are the pleasures, these the shows of the Christian; they are holy, lasting, free. . . . Do you wish also to have fightings and wrestlings? They are at your door, great and many. Behold sensuality overcome by chastity, perfidy slain by faithfulness, cruelty baffled by compassion, wantonness thrown into the shade by modesty. Such are the contests which we have among us; in these we gain our crown. Do you wish also for blood? You have Christ's."

We could have wished that the treatise had ended here. But there is a closing chapter,[1] in which Tertullian describes the joys which await the Christian in

[1] *De Spectaculis*, c. 30.

the future. He pictures in glowing colours another great spectacle, the final triumph of the kingdom of God, and the judgement upon the nations; and he rejoices in the prospect of the destruction of Christ's enemies. "How I shall admire! how I shall laugh! how I shall rejoice! how I shall exult, when I behold so many and such great kings, whose deification was publicly announced, groaning in the lowest depths of darkness with Jupiter himself and with their witnesses! When I behold governors of provinces, who persecuted the name of the Lord, devoured by fires more raging than those with which they raged against the Christians! And, besides, those wise philosophers put to shame in the presence of their disciples, who are burning together with them!" The anticipation of this great spectacle is an ample compensation for the loss of the amusements in the circus, the amphitheatre, the race-course.

And thus the treatise closes. It contains some noble thoughts, side by side with arguments which are fanciful or exaggerated. The closing passage more particularly (which has doubtless influenced the utterances of poets and divines of much later times) manifests Tertullian's devoted attachment to Christianity, and his hatred of everything which opposes the Gospel; but we also discern a selfish human desire for vengeance. There is an ardent faith indeed, but a lack of Christian love.

Not long after the publication of this book, Tertullian wrote a treatise "on Idolatry." The aim of

the two works is similar, but the range of the latter is wider. Christians living in the midst of a heathen world, he says, are to regulate their entire life and conduct by the principle, "No fellowship with idolatry." Now many callings in life minister, directly or indirectly, to the practice of idolatry, such as the making of images, the sale of incense, astrology, and even in some measure the teaching of rhetoric and classical literature. The holding of civil offices necessitates, as a rule, attendance at public sacrifices; while military service is an attempt to serve two masters. Tertullian therefore calls upon Christians, not only to give up all such occupations, but to avoid everything in social customs and in ordinary conversation which savours of idolatry.

We come now to a group of writings which were occasioned by the outbreak of persecution against the Church. It may be well to remind you that the profession of Christianity was, from the first, illegal in the Roman Empire, even before any special legislation was directed against the Christians. In 112 A.D. the Emperor Trajan, in answer to an inquiry on the part of Pliny, the proconsul of Bithynia, had published his "Rescript," to the effect that the Christians were not to be sought out, nor were anonymous accusations to be received; but, on the other hand, if Christians were formally complained of, and convicted, and if they refused to sacrifice to the gods, they were to be punished with death. The Rescript therefore confirmed the existing law, which declared the profession

of Christianity to be a crime; but it put a check upon officious inquiries and upon informers, and it allowed even convicted Christians to escape, if they would renounce their Christianity. Christians were still regarded as criminals, but they were put on a more favourable footing than ordinary criminals. As Tertullian points out scornfully in his "Apology," the decree was illogical. Its terms were, however, dictated by a feeling of humanity. This Rescript continued in force for about a century and a half. The practical effect was that the Christians might have, and did sometimes have, long periods of repose, but that at any moment the law might be set in motion against them. Whenever there was a public calamity, the mob, instigated perhaps by heathen priests, would declare that the gods were angry because of the Christians. The cry would be raised, "The Christians to the lions!" They would be dragged before the tribunal; they would be asked whether they were Christians; and on their confession they would be sentenced to death. During the closing years of the second century, which were also years of great political commotion, the Church of Africa was visited by several such outbursts of persecution.

It was one of these which called forth Tertullian's "Address to the Martyrs." Some Christians had been seized and imprisoned for their faith, and martyrdom was in prospect. Their fellow-Christians vied with each other in acts of love to the sufferers: abundant

supplies of food were taken to the prison for them. This suggested to Tertullian the idea of sending them a letter of comfort and exhortation, for, when the bodily necessities were being attended to, it was not right that the needs of the spirit should be neglected. The main drift of this delightful little book is to urge the captives to view their sufferings as a blessing in disguise, and to stimulate them not to waver in their loyalty to Christ. "You are separated from the world," he says. "If we reflect that the world is more really the prison, we shall understand that you have gone out of a prison rather than into one. The world has deeper darkness, blinding men's hearts; it has heavier chains with which it binds the souls of men. It contains a larger number of criminals, even the whole human race. It awaits the judgement, not of the proconsul, but of God." In one important respect the imprisoned Christians are more favourably situated than their brethren outside—they are free from contact with surrounding idolatry. "You do not look upon strange gods; you do not run against their images; you do not take part in heathen festivals; you are not molested by the unclean fumes of the sacrifices; you are not annoyed by the cries of the public shows, by the cruelty or madness or immodesty of those who frequent them. . . . You are free from causes of offence, from temptations, from evil recollections, and now even from persecution itself. The prison is to the Christians what the wilderness was to the prophet. The Lord Himself spent much time

in retirement, that He might pray more freely, that He might retire from the world." Tertullian also urges the martyrs to be at peace with one another. "The prison is the devil's house. . . . But you have come into the prison, that you may trample him under foot, even in his own abode. . . . Let him not say, 'They are in my house: I will tempt them with vile hatred, with dissensions among one another.' . . . Let him not succeed so well in his own kingdom as to set you at variance with one another; but let him find you guarded and armed with peace, for peace among you is war against him." He then seeks to inspire the martyrs with firmness and heroism. He reminds them that soldiers and athletes submit to much hardness. And shall the Christian athlete shrink from painful discipline? "You are about to enter upon a noble contest, in which the living God is the superintendent, the Holy Spirit the trainer; in which the prize is an eternal crown, a citizenship of angelic essence in heaven, glory for ever and ever."

Not many years afterwards Tertullian wrote his "Apology," the most important of all his works. It dates from about 197 A.D.; at any rate it was composed during the reign of the Emperor Septimius Severus.[1] It was addressed to the proconsul and the governors of Africa; a parallel work, entitled "to the Nations," being addressed to heathen nations generally. The "Apology" is not, strictly speaking, a statement of the evidences of Christianity, though it

[1] See *Apologeticus*, c. 4.

contains incidentally valuable evidential passages. It is rather a judicial plea on behalf of the Christians; their innocence is established as against certain moral and criminal charges which the pagans brought against them, and these charges are flung back upon the pagans themselves. Thus the warfare is carried into the enemy's territory, and the "Apology" comes to be, not only a defence of the Christians, but also an attack upon pagan life and morality. Let us endeavour to gain some idea of its contents.

Tertullian first dwells upon the injustice in the mode of procedure adopted against Christians. The rules ordinarily followed in the administration of justice are set aside; no inquiry is made, no defence is allowed. The Christian is simply asked whether he is a Christian, and on his mere confession he is condemned, even though no crime is proved against him. Nay, such is the perversity of the judges that, though in all other cases torture is applied to make a man confess, in the case of a Christian the torture is used to make him withdraw his confession and tell an untruth. This treatment of the Christian on the part of the judges proceeds from ignorance. "It is a proof of their ignorance that all who once hated Christianity, because they did not know it, have ceased to hate it as soon as they came to know it." And this ignorance is wilful and culpable; the judges prefer to remain in ignorance, because they are already resolved to hate the Church. If the heathens answer that the laws must be respected, let us consider how

unjust and unreasonable the law is, which simply says, "You Christians have no right to exist." It is unjust, because it punishes the mere name of Christian. Such a law should be speedily abolished; there is abundant precedent for abrogating bad laws. As to the provision that no deity should be consecrated without previous sanction from the Senate, does that not make the gods dependent on man? "Unless a god shall give satisfaction to man, he will not be counted a god!" And it is strange, forsooth, that men should set themselves up as protectors of the laws and institutions of their forefathers, who have openly violated some of the most useful and necessary rules of these ancestors. What has become of the old laws forbidding luxury and extravagance in dress and entertainments? What has become of the old modesty and sobriety? "You are for ever praising antiquity, and day by day you introduce novelties."

Tertullian then proceeds to deal in order with the several charges brought against the Christians. They are five in number. The first is that of infanticide and infamous crimes, which were supposed to be practised at their meetings. This charge, we may notice in passing, probably arose from the secrecy with which the Christians met for the celebration of the Holy Communion and the Love-feast. Tertullian answers that Christians have never been seen to commit such crimes, though they are daily beset by enemies, and have often been surprised at their meetings. Is it likely, too, that men who believe in

a future judgment and in the life eternal could do such things? A heathen could not bring himself to commit such abominations. "Why then," he asks the heathen, "do you think that a Christian would do what you would not do yourself? A Christian is a man as well as you." But our author goes a step further; he flings the charge back upon the pagans, giving a plain, unvarnished account of the awful degradation and impurity of heathen life. "If you would take note," he concludes, "that such sins exist among yourselves, you would perceive that they have no existence among Christians. But these two forms of blindness readily go together, namely, that those who do not see what is, think that they see what is not."

The second charge is that the Christians have abandoned the worship of the national gods. "Yes," says Tertullian, "they have done so, ever since they have learnt that these gods have no existence." He appeals to the heathen conscience itself; it cannot deny that the pretended gods of paganism were originally men. And if they were men once, and were afterwards deified, does that not imply that there must have been some greater god who could have raised them to divine honour? And then these gods were men of the worst character. Why was heaven opened to them, and shut against better men? And how shamefully do the pagans themselves treat their deities? They choose which gods they will worship, and they reject the rest; they use their temples as a

source of gain; they cheat them in their religious rites, offering them worn-out and diseased animals as victims; they make them the subject of their jests in the theatre, and they defile their places of worship by gross sins.

Of Christian worship the heathen have formed most ridiculous notions. Some have imagined that the Christians worship an ass's head. This fable has arisen, says Tertullian, from confusing the Christians and the Jews, and because Tacitus—"by no means tacit when it comes to telling lies"—relates that the Jews, after being guided by wild asses in the wilderness, consecrated in their gratitude an ass's head. In contrast to such unworthy notions, Tertullian sets forth the true Christian doctrine of one God, the Creator of all things. To Him both the works of nature and the human soul bear witness, and "it is the chief crime of men that they will not recognise Him of whom they cannot possibly be ignorant. That we might know Him and His counsels and His will more fully and decisively, He has given a revelation of Himself in the Scriptures, if there be any one who will seek God, and seeking find Him, and finding believe Him, and believing serve Him." The writings of Moses and the Prophets are far more ancient than the works of Greek poets and philosophers, and on this ground they have a superior claim to be accepted as Divine truth. We believe these Scriptures, because what was foretold in them has come to pass.

Tertullian then speaks of Christ. He dwells on the preparation for His coming, the election and rejection of Israel, the miraculous birth, His relation to God the Father—which he illustrates by the relation of the ray to the sun—His mighty deeds on earth, His death—which had, indeed, been foretold, and which was accompanied by signs—His resurrection and ascension. For the truth of all these statements Tertullian appeals to the supposed communication of Pilate to the Emperor Tiberius. "What Christians say, and what they will cry out, even when tortured and bleeding, is: 'We worship God through Christ.'"

To find a proof for the divinity of Christ, which even the heathen will accept, Tertullian calls in the testimony of demons. These are the offspring of fallen angels. They lurk among the temples and statues of the gods, and it is they who delude men to worship idols, and who lead their souls astray. Yet, if a Christian adjures them in the name of Christ, they leave the person into whom they have entered; and this witness is all the more remarkable, because it is against their own interest to give it.

Tertullian concludes his long answer to the second charge by retorting it upon the pagans. They are the real atheists, because they neglect the truth and worship a lie.

The third charge was that of disloyalty to the Emperor. The position of Christians was in this respect a very difficult one. According to the ideas

of the ancient world, Church and State were not only connected, but were one and the same; and when the Emperor came to gather in his hands all the functions of the State, and was regarded as the personification of the State, it readily came to pass that divine honours also were paid to him. In such worship Christians could never join, but by their abstinence they incurred the charge of being disloyal subjects.

Our author does not deny the charge, but he tells his readers that Christians pray for the welfare of the Emperor to the true, the living God, whose favour the Emperor must himself desire above that of all others, and from whom he has both his life and his sovereign power. "Thither we Christians look up, with hands outstretched, because they are innocent; with head bare, because we are not ashamed; without a prompter, because we pray from the heart." And we pray for our rulers, because Scripture expressly commands this. And next Tertullian appeals to facts. Is it not the heathen who have stirred up rebellions against the Emperor, and the very men too who have most zealously observed the festivals in the Emperor's honour? But the Christians are the most loyal subjects, which is the more noteworthy, because they would be strong enough to offer armed resistance, if they thought it right. "We are of yesterday; yet we have filled every place of yours—cities, lodging-houses, fortresses, towns, markets, the very camp, tribes, town-councils, the palace, the senate, the forum; we have left you nothing but the temples. For what

war should we not have been fit and ready, even though with unequal forces, we who so readily suffer ourselves to be slaughtered—if in our teaching it were not more lawful to be killed than to kill?" And to show what peaceable citizens the Christians are, Tertullian lifts the veil and gives a description of their meetings for worship. This is one of the most beautiful passages in the "Apology"; the storm of controversy is for a moment hushed, and, as if in keeping with his subject, the author writes in a calm and gentle tone. "We are made a body by common religious feeling, unity of discipline, and the bond of hope. We come together in a meeting and assembly, that we may, as it were, form a band, and so in prayer to God beset Him with our supplications. This violence is well-pleasing to God. We pray also for emperors, for their ministers, and for those who are in power, for the prosperity of the world, for peace therein, for the delay of the end. We meet together for the reading of the Divine Scriptures, if the character of the times necessitates either forewarning or reminder. However that may be, with the holy words we nourish our faith, lift up our hope, confirm our confidence, and no less make strong our discipline by impressing their precepts."

A fourth charge was that the Christians had drawn down upon the Empire the calamities by which it had been visited of late—war, famine, pestilence. Nay, says Tertullian, such things happened long before the rise of Christianity. There were no Christians

in the world when Sodom and Gomorrah were devoured by fire, when the Gauls captured Rome, and when Hannibal defeated the Roman army at Cannæ. Besides, no calamity has befallen your cities which has not struck the temples as well as the walls; the gods cannot then have sent down the calamities, for they have themselves suffered therefrom. It is the true God who has sent them, because mankind has not honoured Him. Recently, however, there have been fewer calamities than in former times, and this is owing to the prayers of the Christians.

One more charge remained, that the Christians were useless members of society, commercially unprofitable to the community. Our author shews that this charge is untrue. No doubt, there are certain classes of society, such as soothsayers and astrologers and sorcerers, to whom the Christians bring no profit. "But to be unfruitful to these is in itself a noble fruit." As for the gods, Christians give all their alms to the poor, and they can spare nothing for the temple revenues. "Let Jupiter stand by the roadside and beg, and then he shall receive an alms!"

But, it was urged, Christianity is merely a school of philosophy. This is the last point discussed in the treatise. Tertullian argues that there is nothing in common between philosophers and Christians. He examines the lives of the former; in the most severe and unjust manner he brings up every bad feature in the personal character of the leading philosophers, and contrasts it with Christian virtue.

"What likeness is there," he concludes, "between the philosopher and the Christian, the disciple of Greece and the disciple of Heaven, between the man who trades for fame and the man who trades for life, between the talker and the doer, between the man who pulls down and the man who builds up, between the friend and the foe of error?" And if there is any resemblance between the teaching of philosophers and the teaching of Christians, it is, so Tertullian thinks, because the former have borrowed some things from the Old Testament Scriptures, which, however, they have distorted.

Very grand is the triumphant strain with which the "Apology" closes. "Go on, worthy magistrates, torment us, torture us, condemn us, trample upon us: your iniquity is the proof of our innocence; therefore God permits us to suffer these things. . . . Nor does your cruelty, however refined, avail; rather, it forms an inducement to men to join our sect. We grow more, as often as we are mown down by you. The blood of Christians is a seed. . . . We render thanks to you for your sentences of condemnation. As the divine and the human are ever opposed to each other, so, when we are condemned by you, we are acquitted by God."

This "Apology" differs in two respects from the Greek Apologies which had already been composed. It is the first occasion on which a trained lawyer pleads the cause of Christianity at the bar of heathenism; hence more attention is paid to the legal aspects of

the question, and there are more frequent references to history and politics. But still more striking is the attitude taken up towards philosophy. Most of the Greek Apologists, such as Justin Martyr, and Clement, and Origen, regarded philosophy as a divinely-ordered preparation for the Gospel in the Gentile world. The Word of God before the Incarnation scattered some seeds of truth among philosophers and poets. Hence the attitude taken up by these Apologists towards the philosophers was respectful, and they delighted to trace points of correspondence between their teaching and the teaching of Christianity. Tertullian, on the other hand, entirely opposes every attempt to bring about a reconciliation between philosophy and the Gospel. He protests emphatically against all heathen culture, regarding it as inspired by evil spirits.

The "Apology" has its faults. Its strictures on the philosophers are unjust. It is a weak point too that Tertullian appeals to the very uncertain witness of exorcisms as an evidence for the divinity of Christ. And, speaking generally, the tone throughout the book is that of a man who wishes to crush his opponent by irrefutable logic, rather than to convince him of the truth of the Gospel. Yet in the words of Pressensé,[1] "we do not hesitate to place among the very masterpieces of the human mind this treatise, so mightily is it moved with a great impulse. . . . Never did oppressed truth and justice utter speech more

[1] "Early Years of Christianity," vol. ii. p. 149 (English translation).

bold, elevated, and enthusiastic. Never did moral superiority more grandly assert itself in presence of material weight, bent upon crushing it."

As to the effect of the "Apology" we have no precise information; but its tone was too defiant to conciliate the Roman authorities. Persecution continued for some years longer to lie heavily on the churches of Africa, and it was not till another century had elapsed, that the Roman Empire bowed before the Cross of Christ.

The "Apology" was followed in a short time by a treatise called "The Testimony of the Naturally Christian Soul," which is in some sense a supplement to it. Tertullian sought for some positive argument by which he might convince heathen readers of the truth of Christianity. This argument must be based on some ground which they held in common. What could this be? It could not be the Scriptures, for the pagans did not recognise their authority. It could not be philosophy, for, as soon as philosophic teaching came near to Christianity, the pagans refused to follow it.[1] So Tertullian appeals to the natural instincts of the human soul. There is a correspondence between the soul and the Christian religion; they were made for each other. The human soul is naturally, constitutionally Christian; and Christianity satisfies its needs. It is very striking (as Neander has pointed out[2]) that Tertullian, who of all the early

[1] *De Testimonio Animæ*, c. 1.
[2] *Antignostikus*, p. 259 (English edition).

Fathers has most strongly testified of the evil adhering to human nature, and of its need of redemption, has also taught in the strongest terms the original, ineffaceable alliance between human nature and the divine.

In the "Apology" he had already sketched this line of argument; in the new treatise he works it out. "I call," he says, "on a new witness, one better known than any literature, more frequently discussed than any science, more widely spread than any book, greater than all else in man. . . . Come forth, O soul. . . . I summon thee, not as thou art when, tutored by the schools, trained in libraries, nurtured in Attic academies and porches, thou givest forth wisdom; I want thee in thy simple, rude, unrefined, ignorant state, as thou art in those who have thee alone; I want thee pure and entire, as thou comest from the cross-road, the highway, the workshop; I want thy inexperience, because no one has any confidence in thy experience, so small is it." This witness of the soul consists in exclamations which come involuntarily from the lips even of pagans, such as "Good God!" "Great God!" "If God will." The soul does not at such times invoke any of the numerous heathen deities, but calls "God" simply by this name, thus bearing testimony to the existence of One Supreme God. In like manner, when the soul says, "God bless you," "God will requite you," "God will judge between you and me;" or when it calls the departed friend "poor"; or when it betrays fear

of death, it bears witness to a life after death, and to a future judgement. The soul is also self-condemned if it does not accept Christianity. "Justly then every soul is a defendant as well as a witness; guilty of error to the same extent as it is a witness for truth; and on the Day of Judgement it will stand before the courts of God, having nothing to say. Thou proclaimedst God, O soul, and thou didst not seek Him; thou didst abhor demons, and yet thou didst adore them; thou didst invoke the judgement of God, and didst not believe in its reality; thou didst foresee the punishments of hell, and didst not beware of them; thou hadst a savour of Christianity, and thou didst persecute the Christians."

In the short time that remains to me, it is not possible to do more than make bare mention of some other works which Tertullian produced during this period of his life. He commenced his controversy with false doctrine by writing his "Prescription against Heretics," a remarkable book, which, however, it will be best for us to consider in connection with his other anti-heretical publications.

Four books dealing with devotional or moral subjects must be mentioned here. One of these is the treatise "on Repentance," which shows us Tertullian's deep-rooted horror of sin, and his repentance for his own past conduct. "O sinner, like myself (or rather less guilty than I am, for I acknowledge a pre-eminence in sin), lay hold of repentance, and cling

to it, as the shipwrecked man clings to the plank which saves him."[1]

Then we have a treatise "on Prayer," which takes the form of an exposition of the Lord's Prayer; and a treatise "on Patience." The latter was addressed primarily to himself. He knows hat he has not the virtue of patience; he almost despairs of ever attaining to it; God has not granted him this gift. It is a rash undertaking for him to write on such a subject; but, just as a sick man likes to dwell on the blessings of health, so it is a comfort to Tertullian to speak about patience. Very beautiful is the portrait of Patience which he draws at the close of the book.[2] "Her countenance is tranquil and calm, her forehead is pure, not marked by any wrinkle of sorrow and anger; . . . her eyes look down in humility, not in unhappiness; her lips are sealed with dignified silence; her hue is that of those who are without care and without guilt. . . . She is seated on the throne of that mild and gentle Spirit, who is not in the roll of the whirlwind, nor in the dark cloud, but is a Spirit of tender serenity, simple and open, whom Elias saw in his third vision. For where God is, there too is His disciple, Patience. When therefore the Spirit of God descends, Patience accompanies Him inseparably."

Lastly, we have to mention Tertullian's two books addressed "to his Wife." In the former of these he exhorts his wife, in the event of his dying before

[1] *De Pœnitentia*, c. 4. [2] *De Patientia*, c. 15.

her, not to marry again; in the latter, fearing that she may not be able to live up to so high a standard, he urges her at least not to marry a heathen, and he paints a vivid picture of the evils of such a union.

In this last group of writings, that on moral and devotional topics, we can already discern an earnest striving on the part of Tertullian to reach a higher level of Christian holiness than that prevalent among the majority of Churchmen of his day. It was to be expected therefore that, if he met a body of Christians who likewise aimed at a high standard of morality, and who practised a rigid asceticism, he would recognise them as congenial spirits. Such a body of men were the Montanists. Tertullian was attracted to them, and about the close of the second century he became an adherent of Montanism.

We live in a very different age from that of Tertullian. The Church of Christ is not now called upon to suffer the persecution of fire and sword. We are not now surrounded by open idolatry and by idolatrous customs. And yet we too are called upon to fight with the world and the devil, in a different form, but in as true a sense, as were our African brethren 1700 years ago. May the voice of their heroic teacher, still speaking powerfully, though so many centuries have passed, encourage us to "stand fast in the faith, to quit us like men, and to be strong."

TERTULLIAN.

SECOND LECTURE.

AT the close of my last lecture I mentioned that Tertullian, about the year 200 A.D., joined the Montanists. It will be desirable to say a few words about this sect. During the second century a change had been gradually and imperceptibly coming over the Church: it had become more worldly. In part this was a fact to be regretted. Christians were content with a somewhat lower standard of holiness than in the early days; there was a growing formalism, the beginning too of a tendency to claim a sacerdotal character for the Christian ministry. But from another point of view this change in the Church marked a real progress. Christians were realising that no department of human life was alien to them; that all things were theirs; that it was their duty, not to hold aloof from the course of the world, but to take part in it, and to leaven all human affairs with the spirit of Christianity. Hence the majority of Christians no longer took up so exclusive an attitude as had characterised the first age, towards social life, towards human learning and interests.

When a new tendency is at work, there is generally also a counter-tendency to be traced, which seeks to hold fast what is old, and which sometimes, by its exaggerations, ends in discrediting the old altogether. Such a counter-tendency was Montanism. It had its home in Phrygia, in the highlands of Asia Minor, where the founder, Montanus, began to teach about the middle of the second century. He was not a man of great power; his importance lies in the fact that he gave a definite expression to thoughts and aspirations which were cherished by many. The Montanists were in agreement with the Church on fundamental points of doctrine; repeatedly Tertullian points to their orthodoxy. But the movement was an attempt to stem the growing worldliness of the Church. It resisted the claims of the hierarchy, and emphasised the priesthood of all Christians. But the most characteristic features are these two: its claim to prophetic gifts, and its asceticism.

As against the danger of formalism, the Montanists emphasised the truth that the Holy Spirit had not merely inspired Prophets and Apostles in the past, but that He was continually present with the Church, and was still teaching the people of God. More particularly they held that He was revealing Himself in their own day through inspired prophets and prophetesses. Let us call to mind here that the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit, of which we read in the New Testament, continued in the Church for some time after the death of the Apostles. The

Fathers of the second century speak of the gifts of miracle and prophecy as still occurring among the Christians of their day. But these gifts became less and less frequent, and gradually passed away altogether. The Montanists sought to perpetuate them; they even asserted that henceforth they were to be granted in a larger measure than ever before. You will observe that the great difference between the Montanists and the Catholic Church was not that the Church denied the existence of prophetic gifts, which the Montanists affirmed, but that the Montanists laid far greater stress on these gifts. In the Church the utterances of the prophets were entirely subordinate to the written words of Scripture; they served to enforce some old truth, not to teach anything new. The Montanists, on the other hand, held that the revelation contained in Scripture was not the final message of God; that, just as the teaching of Christ had superseded that of Moses, so the utterances of the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete, given in prophecy, might supersede the written teaching of the Apostles. The danger was increased by the opinion commonly held in that age as to the nature of prophetic inspiration. It was supposed that this consisted in a state of ecstasy in which man was entirely passive, and that his soul was like a harp, the chords of which were struck by a heavenly plectrum. Thus the door was opened for manifold delusions, and there was a serious risk that the imaginations of excited minds might be mistaken for the voice of the Spirit of God; while the

attitude taken up towards the written Scriptures became uncertain. It was inevitable that the great body of Christendom should part company with the Montanists here.

The second main characteristic of Montanism was its asceticism. It was this indeed which the utterances of the prophets inculcated. To counteract the increasing worldliness of the age, a rigid system of morality and discipline was enforced. Special stress was laid on three points. In the first place, a distinction was made between two classes of sins, sins venial and sins mortal, the latter category including such offences as adultery and apostasy. If a Christian after his baptism was guilty of a mortal sin, he must—so said the Montanists—be excluded for ever from Church-fellowship. God indeed might pardon his sin, but the Church had no right to pronounce forgiveness; and on this side of the grave no restoration was possible, however sincere might be the repentance. The second point was the dislike of marriage, and the total prohibition of a second marriage. The third was the inculcation of the duty of fasting. Here again it was not so much the teaching itself, as the length to which the teaching was pushed, that separated the Montanists from the Church. In the Church, too, voices had been heard which expressed admiration for the unmarried state, and a strong dislike of second marriages. Fasts too had been recommended; and there had been cases where absolution had been refused to those who had committed grave sin after

their baptism. But where the Church gave counsel, in such a manner as to leave scope for the individual conscience, the Montanists laid down a rigid, binding rule, which they desired to impose on all men; and it was strange that a body of men whose aim was to protest against the growing worldliness and formalism of Christendom, who claimed to possess a lofty spirituality, and called themselves the "spiritual" men, should end by substituting for the freedom of the Gospel the bondage of a code of laws. Their holiness consisted in rigid compliance with a series of minute external rules.

The Montanist movement was not destined to continue for long, but at first it spread very rapidly. About the close of the second century it reached North Africa. Tertullian could not fail to be attracted by it. Much of what the Montanists taught he had already advocated himself; and the stern morality and lofty aims of the New Prophecy could not but be congenial to one who was striving after a high ideal, and was lamenting the imperfections of the mass of Christians. Thus Tertullian became an adherent of Montanism, without, however, at first formally separating from the great body of Christendom.

We must now ask what effect his transition to Montanism had upon his writings. There was at first no very marked change. He still occupied himself with the same topics, and treated them in the same manner as before. Indeed, his contest with Gnosticism he continued with increased zeal, as though he wished

to shew that on fundamental points of doctrine he occupied his old standpoint. He was conscious too that readers would be found, not merely among the Montanists, but among Churchmen also. The latter he hoped to win over to a recognition of the Montanist prophecies; and, while he keeps these in the background, he rarely concludes a book without earnestly exhorting his readers to give heed to the utterances of the Paraclete, that so their thirst for instruction may be quenched, and all doubts be set at rest.[1] His austerity, however, especially when he writes on questions of morals, becomes increasingly severe; his tone against the advocates of milder views increasingly bitter; and he is more given to exaggerations; while the very climax of harshness is reached in his latest works.

I will now proceed to speak of at least the more important works which belong to this second period of Tertullian's literary activity, though I shall not attempt to arrange them in precise chronological order.

The earliest writings of this period arose from incidents connected with a fresh persecution which fell upon the Church. In the year 202 the Emperor Septimius Severus issued an edict forbidding Jews and Christians to proselytise. No existing law was altered by this enactment. That a Roman should become a Jew, had been forbidden long ago; while Christianity was altogether illegal. But the Edict of Severus had the practical effect of admonishing

[1] *De Resurrectione Carnis*, c. 63.

the provincial governors to enforce the existing laws against the Christians. Christianity was nothing, if not aggressive; and to forbid the Church to proselytise was to strike a severe blow at her. The persecution raged severely in Egypt, and soon reached Proconsular Africa. An event occurred which caused considerable commotion, and which created not a little alarm among the Christians. An imperial gift was being distributed in the camp; the soldiers were approaching, wearing, according to custom, laurel wreaths. One of them, a Christian, having conscientious scruples against the wearing of wreaths, did not put his wreath on his head, but carried it in his hand. He was noticed; the matter was reported to the tribune. The soldier, on being interrogated, said that he was not at liberty to wear the wreath; and being pressed for his reason, acknowledged that he was a Christian. The case was referred to a higher court, and the soldier was cast into prison, there to await martyrdom. In prison, as Tertullian says, "he took off his heavy cloak; he loosed from his feet the irksome soldier's shoe, beginning to stand upon holy ground; he gave up the sword, which was not needed for the defence of his Lord; the laurel wreath slipped from his hand; and now, expecting the purple robe of his own blood, shod with the preparation of the Gospel, girt with the sharp sword, even the word of God, completely armed with the Apostle's armour, and crowned more worthily with the white crown of martyrdom, he awaits the largess

of Christ."[1] The general opinion of Christians was by no means favourable to the soldier. They blamed him as a rash man, over-eager to die; they reproached him for imperilling the Christian society, and for disturbing the peace which they had enjoyed for some time.

These circumstances called forth Tertullian's treatise "on the Soldier's Crown," the main purpose of which is to shew that it is not lawful for Christians to wear a wreath. He speaks with praise of this soldier, whom he calls a true soldier of Christ, and in terms of severe reproach of all timid Christians who will not brave martyrdom. If these Christians assert that the wearing of wreaths is not forbidden in Scripture, and that what is not expressly forbidden is allowed, Tertullian answers that it may be asserted with equal right that what is not expressly allowed in Scripture is forbidden. Tradition and custom must be considered as well as the written word of Scripture; and there are many usages observed in the Church for which there is no express warrant in Scripture, such as the renunciation of the devil with all his pomp at baptism, the celebration of the Holy Communion at daybreak, the counting it unlawful to fast or kneel on the Lord's Day. And even in civil matters custom is received instead of law, where there is no positive legal enactment. In this case certainly the custom of Christians is opposed to the wearing of wreaths. Besides, reason is on the side of custom, for it is

[1] *De Corona Militis*, c. 1.

irrational to wear a wreath on the head. Flowers are given for the smell, or the colour, or both; and he who wears them on his head enjoys neither. Crowns are against nature, and are a sacrilege against God, the Lord of nature.

More serious is the consideration that the wearing of wreaths is bound up with heathen rites, a fact which Tertullian proves by antiquarian research. If it is urged that many other things invented by heathen deities are used by Christians, such as the knowledge of letters, which was first taught by Mercury, and the knowledge of medicine, which was discovered by Æsculapius, Tertullian replies that we must distinguish between things which are necessary and useful to man, and those which are not. Christians may use the former, because it must be supposed that they ultimately come from God, who provided for the wants of man; but the latter they may not use.

But the soldier's wreath raises the larger question whether military service itself is compatible with the profession of Christianity. Tertullian thinks that it is not. "Shall it be lawful to adopt the profession of the sword, when the Lord proclaims that he who uses the sword shall perish by the sword? . . . Shall the Christian keep guard before the temples which he has renounced? And shall he take a meal there where the Apostle has forbidden him?[1] And shall he protect by night those whom by day he has put to flight by exorcisms, leaning and resting on the spear with

[1] 1 Cor. viii. 10.

which Christ's side was pierced? Shall he carry a banner which is a rival of Christ's? Shall he ask a watchword from the Emperor, who has already received one from God? Shall he when dead be disturbed by the trumpet of the trumpeter, who expects to be aroused by the angel's trump? And shall a Christian's body be burnt according to camp rule, to whom Christ has remitted the penalty of hell fire?"[1] No Christian should join the army; and if a soldier is converted to the Christian faith, he should either withdraw from the service, or be prepared to endure martyrdom. In the eyes of the Lord there is no difference between soldiers and civilians; what the Lord demands of all men alike is faithfulness. "The state of faith does not admit pleas of necessity. They are under no necessity to sin, whose one necessity is not to sin." Tertullian then reviews the various occasions in public and private life when the pagans wore wreaths. He concludes that in all these the Christians have no interest: their home is the heavenly Jerusalem; with the affairs of the world they have little concern. He points to Christ, who wore the crown of thorns. "And will *you* wear a crown of laurel, or of roses and lilies and violets, or even of gold and jewels?" Be faithful to God, and He will crown you hereafter. To him that overcometh, He says, will I give a crown of life. "Why condemn your head to a little wreath or necklace, when it is destined for a diadem? For Christ Jesus has made us even kings to God and His Father."

[1] *De Corona Militis*, c. 11.

The drift of the treatise then is an exhortation to Christians to have the courage of their convictions. We find in it the heroic spirit of Tertullian and his intense moral earnestness; we find not a little of his grand and striking thought, and of his fervent eloquence. And yet there is something that disappoints. It was, after all, a trifling matter about which our author argued here so earnestly. So far as the wearing of wreaths was connected with idolatrous rites, he has our modern sympathies in contending against the custom. Beyond this, however, we fail to follow him. We cannot admit that to wear a wreath of flowers is under all circumstances a sin against nature and nature's God.

About the same time Tertullian wrote another work, "on Flight in Persecution." Like the book just mentioned, it contains some noble passages, but it is also characterised by exaggerations. The Christians in Africa, anticipating further attacks, were discussing the question whether it was lawful to escape persecution by flight. Tertullian had at one time allowed flight in persecution;[1] but now, as a Montanist, he had altered his view. Did not the voice of the Paraclete, given in Montanist prophecy, exhort men to suffer martyrdom, and not to flee? To this view Tertullian gives expression in the treatise. He begins by asking who is the author of persecution, God or Satan? He answers, God. Persecution is subservient to His will, and is necessary, in order to separate true Christians

[1] *De Patientia*, c. 13.

from merely professing Christians. But, if persecution comes from God, it cannot be right to flee therefrom. To flee because you are afraid that you will apostatise, is tantamount to your having already apostatised. As to the Lord's commandment, "When they persecute you in this city, flee into the next," Tertullian labours to show that it refers, not to Christians in every age, but to the Apostles, and to these only until the time when Judæa should be filled with their testimony. The conduct of the Apostles proves the truth of this view, he thinks, because in their later years they no longer fled. Those on the other side urged the consideration that the Lord in His loving-kindness had provided for the weakness of some of His people, and had suggested flight. But Tertullian indignantly rejects such a plea. The Lord is able even without flight—a protection so base, unworthy, servile—to protect the weak! And in fact He does not spare, but He rejects the weak. "He who will value his life more than Me, is not worthy of Me." Last of all, in the Revelation, He does not propose flight to the fearful, but a miserable portion in the lake of brimstone and fire, which is the second death. He who fears to suffer cannot truly belong to Christ, cannot truly love Him, because "perfect love casteth out fear." "And therefore many are called, but few chosen. It is not asked, who is ready to follow the broad road, but who the narrow."

It is the voice of fanaticism which is speaking here. There is no compassion for the weak. There

is a harshness which refuses to distinguish between prudence and cowardice; and it is obviously a great exaggeration to say that to flee from apostasy is as bad as apostasy itself. And yet the Christian heroism is on the side of Tertullian, rather than on that of his opponents; and a noble faith and trust finds expression in passages like these: "It is the Lord, He is mighty. All things belong to Him; wherever I shall be, I am in His hand. Let Him do what He wills, I go not away; and if it be His will that I lose my life, let Him destroy me Himself, while I keep myself for Him."[1] Or again, "As I owe tribute to Cæsar, do I not owe my blood to God, in return for that of His Son shed for me?"[2]

The weaker Christians encountered those who tried to work upon their timidity. The Gnostics were by no means willing to expose themselves to torture and martyrdom, and they did not wish others to show a heroism in which they themselves were wanting. By sophistical arguments they endeavoured to prove that God, who scorned the blood of bulls and goats, could not desire the blood of men; that Christ had died for men that they might not die; and that the confession of Himself, which Christ had enjoined upon His followers, was to be made before the principalities and powers of heaven. There was a danger that the constancy of some Christians would be shaken by this insidious reasoning. Tertullian felt it his duty to expose the error in a treatise, to which he

[1] *De Fuga*, c. 10. [2] Ibid. c. 12.

gave the characteristic title, "Antidote against the Scorpion's Bite."

A severe persecution was now raging in North Africa. Among the martyrs of the period none are so famous, none have been so affectionately remembered by the Christian Church ever since, as two frail, delicate women, Perpetua and Felicitas, one the daughter of a heathen father of high rank, the other a slave girl. Their sufferings are related in an ancient writing, called "The Passion of St. Perpetua." The writing does not bear the name of its author, but Professor Robinson has concluded, from parallels both in thought and language, that it is from the pen of Tertullian himself.[1] The record tells us how the horrors of the dark prison could not break the peace of mind of these servants of Christ; how they were comforted by glorious visions; how Perpetua underwent the terrible trial of seeing her heathen father throw himself at her feet, and kiss her hands, and beseech her to have compassion on his grey hairs, and to remember her brothers, her mother, her infant child, who could not live without her; and how she made answer to him, "I grieve that my father is the only one of my family who does not rejoice in my suffering; know that we are not in our own hands, but in those of God;" how the deacons of the Church administered baptism to the martyrs in prison, and brought them the Holy Communion; how Felicitas, when suffering the agonies of childbirth in the dreadful prison, was

[1] "The Passion of St. Perpetua," p. 47 ff.

asked by the gaolers whether she could bear the greater agony of being thrown to the wild beasts, if her pain was now so great; and how she made answer, "Now it is I who suffer what I suffer, but then there will be Another in me who will suffer for me, because I too shall be suffering for Him;" how they were led from the prison to the amphitheatre, and so, conquering gloriously in the fight, departed to be with their Lord.

We must now pass on to an important group of Tertullian's works, his controversial writings against heretics. One of these belongs, as we have already mentioned, to his pre-Montanist days, his treatise on the "Prescription of Heretics." It was the Gnostics whom he had chiefly in view. He had found by experience that religious discussions with them proved unprofitable.[1] They did not accept *all* the books of Scripture; and even those which they accepted they altered by omitting some passages or adding others. Meanwhile each side, both orthodox Christians and Gnostics, accused the other of falsifying the Scriptures. Then, too, the Gnostics delighted in allegorical interpretations, by means of which they often entirely misrepresented the sense of a passage, and made it harmonise with their own doctrines.

There was thus no common ground for a discussion; each side claimed the victory for itself, and the effect upon the bystanders was not such as to confirm them in the true faith. The idea then occurred to Tertullian

[1] *De Præscriptione*, c. 18.

of finding some means by which these discussions might be rendered unnecessary, and all heresies excluded once for all, without any detailed controversy. The former advocate called to mind a practice of the law-courts, according to which judicial cases might be cut short at the outset, and the opponent deprived of certain advantages on which he had reckoned, by the raising of a "prescription," or preliminary objection. Hence the title of the book. Not indeed that its main idea was new. Some twenty years before Tertullian wrote, Irenæus, in his great work against the Gnostics, had appealed, as an authority for the faith, to the tradition handed down in the principal churches of Christendom by a regular succession of bishops coming down from the Apostles' days. We shall see how Tertullian applies this idea.

At the commencement of the treatise he refers to the fact that the heretics were fond of quoting the Lord's words, "Seek, and ye shall find." Tertullian answers that these words were spoken to the Jews, before Christ's Person was fully revealed to them. Afterwards, when the Apostles were sent forth to preach the Gospel to the nations, they received the Holy Spirit, who guided them into all truth. Truth therefore need not be sought any longer; it has come to us. But granted that the words of the Lord have their application to us also, still the search is not to be of indefinite duration; we are to seek till we find, and then to guard our faith. Whosoever seeks has not yet found, or he has lost again that which he had

found; and if Christians seek, it must be in the enclosure of truth, not amongst strangers, nor amongst heretics; neither must they call into question anything that is contained in the rule of faith handed down by the Church. Heretics are not to be admitted to discussions on the meaning of the Scriptures; the Scriptures will accommodate themselves to any sort of fanciful interpretation. The question then arises, Who has a right to the Scriptures? Tertullian makes answer: "Where it shall have appeared that there is the truth of Christian teaching and Christian faith, there are the true Scriptures, the true interpretations, and all true Christian traditions." In other words, Tertullian asserts that the Scriptures must be studied in the light of the sound doctrine contained in the rule of faith, and handed down in the churches. Christ, he says, appointed twelve Apostles to be the teachers of the nations. "These accordingly founded in the several cities churches, from which the remaining churches have thenceforth borrowed, and daily borrow, the branch of faith and seeds of teaching, in order that they may become churches. And it is through this fact that they too will be counted Apostolic, as being the offspring of Apostolic churches. Every kind of thing must be estimated by reference to its origin; therefore the churches, though they are so numerous and so great, form but the one primitive Church coming from the Apostles, from which they have all sprung. . . . Here then we enter our prescription (our demurrer), that, if the Lord Jesus

Christ sent Apostles to preach, then others than those whom Christ appointed ought not to be received as preachers. . . . If these things are so, it is in like manner plain that all teaching which agrees with the Apostolic churches, which are the wombs and original sources of the faith, must be reckoned as truth, since it contains without doubt that which the churches received from the Apostles, the Apostles from Christ, and Christ from God; whereas all teaching must be at once judged as false, if its drift is opposed to the truth of the churches and the Apostles, and of Christ and God."[1] To appeal then to the Apostolic churches is the sure method of arriving at truth and of discovering the true meaning of the Scriptures. In this connection Tertullian speaks with respect of the Church of Rome. "How happy is that church on which Apostles poured forth all their teaching along with their blood, where Peter suffers in like manner as his Master, and Paul wins his crown by a death like that of John the Baptist!"[2] If the heretics appeal to the Scriptures, it may be justly said to them: "Who are you? When and whence did you come? What are you doing with what is mine, you who are none of mine? By what right, Marcion, do you hew my wood? By what license, Valentinus, do you divert my streams? By what power, Apelles, do you remove my landmarks? . . . This is my property; I have long possessed it; I possessed it before you. I hold sure title-deeds from those who were the

[1] *De Præscriptione*, c. 20, 21. [2] Ibid. c. 36.

original owners. I am the heir of the Apostles. . . . As for you, they have undoubtedly disinherited you all along, and have renounced you as aliens, as enemies." Tertullian closes the treatise with a passage of terrible irony. He pictures the heretics as standing before the Judgement-Seat of Christ. What will they then plead? "I suppose," he says, "they will allege that nothing was ever proclaimed to them by Christ, or by His Apostles, as to depraved and perverse doctrines that were to come, and how they ought to avoid and abhor them. And Christ and the Apostles will, no doubt, acknowledge that the blame lies rather with themselves and their disciples, in not having given us previous instruction. They will add many words respecting the authority of each heretical teacher—how that they greatly strengthened belief in their teaching; that they raised the dead, healed the sick, foretold the future; that they were deservedly regarded as apostles. . . . And so, forsooth, they will obtain pardon!"

Such is the treatise on the "Prescription of Heretics." In it Tertullian bequeathed to the Church a dangerous legacy, a work which might easily be used in the interests of ecclesiastical despotism and of religious intolerance. If the principles of the book were acted on, all free inquiry in matters of faith would be prohibited, and there could never be any advance in the apprehension of the deeper truths of Christianity. Tertullian himself, though he never formally renounced the principles of the "Prescription," yet did not by any

means adhere to them consistently. We soon find him entering into further discussions with heretics, in the course of which he examines their doctrines in detail and refutes them from Scripture. So again, in his treatise on the "Veiling of Virgins," where he contends for a practice which was not customary in the Church, he says that "Christ had called Himself Truth, not Custom;"[1] and as a Montanist he came to believe that there was a continuity of revelation, through which further truths might be added to those already cherished by Christians. Nevertheless, we can scarcely fail to be impressed by the calm tone of assurance which pervades the treatise on the "Prescription." The author is absolutely confident that the truth is on his side. He speaks as the mouthpiece of the Church; and the Church was conscious of her close connection with the Apostles and with Christ.

This may be a suitable place to say something concerning Tertullian's language and style. It is worthy of notice that the Church of North Africa was the early home of Latin theology, and not the Church of Rome (which latter was, for the first two centuries, a Greek-speaking Church); and Tertullian was the first great Father of the African Church. Hence there fell to him the highly important task of so adapting the Latin tongue that it might serve to set forth the spiritual truths of the Gospel. As was natural with the training which he had received, Tertullian's language abounded in legal phraseology;

[1] *De Virginibus Velandis*, c. 1.

in other words, he used the terms of the law-courts as a vehicle by which to express the teaching of the Gospel. Now when we consider how closely human thought is bound up with language, we shall understand that this use of legal phraseology led men to form legal conceptions of spiritual things; and in this respect Tertullian's influence has been very great. For good or for evil, he did much to shape that form of theological thought which has dominated Western Christendom ever since.

His style is very characteristic. It is like the man himself. It is terse and vigorous, but rough. He is hurried along by the power of the thought within him; he struggles to find adequate words to express all that is in his mind; hence we have often obscure phrases and broken sentences. And yet he is eloquent, for his style is the expression of intense conviction. He is always suggestive, sometimes brilliant, never dull. His writings make a deep impression upon the reader, for they bear the stamp of his vigorous mind.

The remaining anti-heretical and doctrinal writings of Tertullian were produced after he had become a Montanist. One of the most important, as it is also the most lengthy, of these is his treatise "against Marcion," consisting of five books. It was some seventy years since that great Gnostic teacher had come from Asia Minor to Rome, in order to propagate his teaching. He had now been long dead, but he had gained many adherents, who formed a definitely-

organised sect. If the importance of a man may be estimated from the violence and frequency of the attacks made upon him, then Marcion must have exercised a very marked influence, both upon his own, and upon subsequent ages. This was probably due to his intense earnestness, and to the high standard of asceticism which he set up. Tertullian indeed says, and later Fathers repeat, that he was expelled from the Catholic Church for immorality, but this is probably a mere slander. That he made a very remarkable impression upon his contemporaries, there can be no doubt. Of all Gnostics his teaching came nearest to that of orthodox Christianity; but perhaps on that very account the Fathers considered him the most dangerous enemy of the Church. There is no Gnostic leader against whom so many books were written, and to whom so many scornful epithets were applied. Tertullian is not backward in this latter respect; he is never weary of calling Marcion a skipper, in allusion to the occupation of his early days. He says that he has a pumpkin in place of a heart; and the like. The beginning of his treatise is characteristic. He describes the horrors of Pontus, the native country of Marcion. "The fiercest nations inhabit it, if indeed it can be called habitation, where men live in waggons. Their dwelling-place is unsettled, their life uncivilised, their lust unrestrained. . . . In their climate too there is harshness. The light is never clear, the sun never cheerful, the air always cloudy, the whole year is wintry; the only wind that blows is the north

wind. . . . All things are torpid, all are stiff with cold. . . . But nothing in Pontus is so barbarous and sad as that Marcion was born there, Marcion more loathsome than any Scythian, . . . more audacious than an Amazon, darker than the cloud, colder than the winter, more brittle than the ice, more deceitful than the Ister, more rugged than Caucasus."[1]

Marcion had been an orthodox Churchman during his earlier years. With a keen eye to detect things that were opposed to each other, he had been struck by the contrast between Judaism and Christianity, between the Law and the Gospel. But he lacked the historical faculty which could recognise in the later dispensation the development of the earlier. The Law and the Gospel must have proceeded from different authors, he concluded: side by side with the God of the Jews and of the Old Testament, there was another God, the Good God, who had been entirely unknown to men till He revealed Himself in Christ. Like the other Gnostics, Marcion regarded matter as evil, and asserted accordingly that the world, being material and therefore evil, could not have been created by the Good God, but must be the work of the God of the Old Testament. The latter Marcion declared to be a strict Being, limited in power, who confined His rewards to the Jews, and was a severe judge of those who transgressed His laws. The God of the Gospel, on the other hand, exhibited nothing but goodness and loving-kindness, and accepted all

[1] *Adversus Marcionem*, i. 1.

men alike. Christ was not the Messiah whom the God of the Jews had promised; on the contrary, He came as a sudden and totally-unexpected revelation of the unknown Good God; and therefore the God of the Old Testament had instigated the Jews against Him. As matter is evil, Christ could not have had a real human body; He appeared only in semblance of flesh. To St. Paul the work had been given to preach Christ, and he had taught the difference between the Old Dispensation and the New. Marcion would only accept as Scripture ten of St. Paul's Epistles and the Pauline Gospel, that of St. Luke. The other books, he said, contained a corrupted form of Christian teaching, made by those who had wished to bring Christ into harmony with the Law and the Prophets. Marcion considered that it was his own mission to carry on the work of St. Paul, and with all sincerity he believed himself to be the champion of pure Christianity, of which the Catholic Church was a perversion.

It was against this system of teaching, carried on by Marcion's disciples, and widely spread among a body of men whose moral earnestness was beyond question, that Tertullian's great work was directed. The latter is marked by the fulness and thoroughness of its treatment, by fertility in resources for confuting the opponent, by the eloquence and beauty of many of its chapters, and also—what will not surprise us in Tertullian, strange as it would be elsewhere—by its cutting irony.

He begins his work by attacking Marcion's concep-

tion of two Gods. The very idea of God implies that He is a Supreme Being, and therefore He must be alone, and can have no rival. There can be but one God. But the Marcionites are proud of having brought forward a new god, the Good God of the Gospel. "So boys are proud of their new shoes, but their schoolmaster will soon beat their vanity out of them." And a new God, like the new gods whom the pagans from time to time bring forward, must be a false god. The true God is from everlasting, and must therefore be without beginning. But if it is urged that God is new merely in the sense that He has but lately been acknowledged, then again the Marcionites are shown to be in the wrong; for God could not have remained unknown for long ages, owing to His greatness; and He ought not to have remained unknown, owing to His goodness.

The Marcionites disparage the visible world, in order to shew that it could not have been created by the Good God. Tertullian answers that the world is not unworthy of the Good God. The Greeks call it Kosmos, which means ornament; the philosophers say that the elements are divine; certainly the impression which nature makes upon the spectator shews that it is no poor work. "A single flower, I will not say from the meadows, but from the hedgerow; a single little sea-shell, I will not say from the Red Sea, but from any waters; a single wing of a moorfowl, to say nothing of the pea-

cock — will they shew the Creator to be a mean artificer?"

And then Tertullian attacks the conception of a God who manifests nothing but goodness and kindness. If He is good, He must have been so from eternity; why, then, when He saw Adam and all his descendants becoming subject to sin and death, did He not interfere to help them? And goodness cannot be the only attribute of God. Whosoever gives a law must demand obedience to it, and must punish transgressors. He alone is perfectly good who hates evil, and the doctrine of a God who is only kind is disastrous to morality. "Listen, ye sinners," exclaims Tertullian, "and you who are not sinners as yet, listen, that you may be able to become such hereafter! A better God has been discovered, a God who is not offended, who is not angry, who does not punish, who kindles no fire in Gehenna, who suffers no gnashing of teeth in the outer darkness. He is simply good. He does indeed forbid sin, but only in word." And the Marcionites themselves are not consistent on this point. If you only love God, and do not fear Him, "why do you not frequent the festive pleasures of the maddening circus, the bloodthirsty amphitheatre, the lascivious theatre? Why in time of persecution, when the incense-box is presented, do you not purchase your life by denying the faith? 'God forbid,' you answer, 'God forbid.' So you are afraid of sinning, and by your fear you have proved that He is an object of fear, who forbids sin."

The second book deals with God the Creator. In opposition to Marcion, Tertullian shows that His works prove Him to be good. The Marcionites used the fall of man as an argument against the goodness of the God of the Old Testament. Tertullian answers that the guilt of the Fall rests upon man himself, for he had freedom of choice; and free-will was a gift due both to the goodness and the wisdom of God. Without free-will man would not have been like God, and would not have been fitted to be the ruler of the world. Without free-will there could be no reward for doing good, and no punishment for doing evil.

The third book establishes the proof that the Christ who has appeared is the Messiah promised in the Old Testament.

In the fourth and fifth books Tertullian takes his stand upon the Canon of Scripture recognised by Marcion—the Gospel of St. Luke in a mutilated form, and ten Epistles of St. Paul. He goes through these with minute care, and shows how even they refute Marcion's teaching, for the Christ whom they proclaim is none other than the Messiah who was foretold under the Old Dispensation. The opposition between Judaism and Christianity, between the Law and the Gospel, between the Just God and the Good God, does not exist.

Several other doctrinal works of Tertullian arose out of his controversy with Gnosticism. The Gnostic view that everything material, and so too the human

body, is evil, led to the denial of two doctrines of the Christian faith, the true humanity of Christ, and the resurrection of the body. With these two subjects Tertullian deals in his two treatises, "on the Flesh of Christ," and "on the Resurrection of the Flesh."

In the former he defends the doctrine of the Incarnation. He says that it is not unworthy for the Son of God to be born. The Scripture says, "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise." Let the Gnostics bear in mind that the belief that God has been born of a virgin, and in a fleshly nature, is this foolishness of which the Apostle speaks. And all Christianity falls to the ground, if the humanity of Christ is a mere phantom. His sufferings are of no avail for mankind, if they were in semblance only. "Falsely then did Paul determine that he would know nothing among us but Jesus crucified; falsely did he assert that He was buried; falsely did he inculcate that He rose again. False, therefore, is our faith also, and all that we hope of Christ will be an empty vision." Then, addressing Marcion, he continues: "O thou most infamous of men, who dost excuse the murderers of God! For Jesus Christ suffered nothing from them, if He did not truly suffer. O thou who dost destroy the indispensable shame of our faith, in pity leave to the world its one hope. Whatever is unworthy of God is profitable for me. I am safe, if I shall not be ashamed of my Lord. 'Of him who shall be ashamed of Me,' He says, 'will I also be ashamed.' I find no other

grounds for shame [than the sufferings of Christ], and by my contempt of shame I am shown to possess a holy boldness and a blessed folly. The Son of God was crucified; I am not ashamed, because men must needs be ashamed of it. The Son of God died; this is entirely worthy of belief, because it is absurd. And He was buried and rose again; it is certain, because it is impossible."[1] These last words have often been quoted, and have sometimes been ridiculed. But we must remember that Tertullian had still in mind the Scripture words that God chose the foolish things of the world to confound the wise. What he means to say is that he believes these truths firmly, because, the more dishonourable and foolish and impossible they appear to the natural man, the more they coincide with the revealed purposes of God.

In contending for the resurrection of the body, Tertullian appeared as the champion of a doctrine which, while it was one of the greatest treasures of the Christian faith, was keenly attacked, not only by the Gnostics, but also by the pagans. The philosophers disparaged the body, and scorned the idea of the soul being reunited with it hereafter. The mass of pagan society might well feel that, in contrast with the gloom and despair which the thought of death brought to them, the Christians had here on their side a powerful force which would attract many converts, and which would enable men to brave martyrdom. Hence the general dislike and even hatred of this doctrine.

[1] *De Carne Christi*, c. 5

Tertullian proves the necessity of the resurrection of the flesh from the consideration that Divine justice cannot leave the flesh unpunished, after it has been the handmaid of the soul during this earthly life. He finds an analogy for the resurrection in the course of nature. "The day dies into the night, and is buried everywhere in darkness. The glory of the world is shrouded; all its substance is covered with blackness. Sadness, silence, stupor reign supreme. . . . And yet the light revives again with its beauty, its dowry, its sun, the same as before, whole and entire, over the whole world; slaying its death, night; breaking open its sepulchre, darkness; appearing as heir to itself. . . Nothing dies, but that it may live again. The whole of this revolving order of the world is a witness of the resurrection of the dead. God wrote it in His works, before He wrote it in His book. He first sent Nature to be thy teacher, intending to send thee also Prophecy hereafter, that, being Nature's disciple, thou mightest the more readily believe Prophecy."[1]

It is not possible in this lecture to do more than make the briefest mention of two other important doctrinal treatises. One of Tertullian's most striking works is his treatise "on the Soul." It consists of four divisions, in which he discusses respectively the nature of the soul, the origin of the individual soul, the relation of the soul to evil, and the state of the soul after death. For his discussion he used all the materials available, not only in the writings of the

[1] *De Resurrectione Carnis*, c. 12.

philosophers, but also among the researches of medical men. The importance of the work lies, not in the conclusions at which the author arrives, for these are in some cases very remote from our modern views, but in the impulse which the treatise gave to further study and investigation of the subject. Tertullian was the pioneer who led Christians into the realm of natural science. They were to take an interest henceforth in the scientific studies of the world. In opposition to the excessive idealism of the Gnostics, Tertullian was a decided realist. This is strikingly illustrated by his view that the soul is corporeal. In support of this curious opinion, he gives the testimony of a Christian woman who had a vision during Divine Service. After the congregation had been dismissed, she reported to the presbyters that she had seen a soul in bodily shape, not, however, a void and empty illusion, but such as would offer itself even to be grasped by the hand, soft and transparent, and of an ethereal colour, and in form exactly agreeing with the human body.[1] When God breathed into Adam the breath of life, that breath, being diffused through every part and member of his body, produced an interior man corresponding in all respects to the exterior.—Some of us will, doubtless, call to mind the manner in which the soul is frequently represented in mediæval art.

Another doctrinal work of Tertullian is the treatise "against Praxeas," a defence of the Christian doctrine

[1] *De Anima*, c. 9.

of the Trinity. It was directed, not against any form of Gnosticism, but against the so-called Patripassian heresy, of which Praxeas, a confessor from Asia Minor, was the first leading advocate. The Patripassians maintained the identity of God the Father and God the Son; Father and Son, they held, were not separate persons, but the One Divine Person had come down to earth, and had suffered, so that the Son was merely the Father veiled in flesh. This teaching proved acceptable to many, and was even favourably received in the Church of Rome for a time. It was specious, because to some men it seemed to be the only form of thought by which the full Divinity of Christ could be reconciled with the doctrine of the Unity of God. Tertullian, in his treatise, taunts Praxeas with having managed the devil's business by crucifying the Father;[1] he points out the difficulties and inconsistencies of the Patripassian theory; and he endeavours to develop the doctrine of a Trinity of Persons in the Godhead with Unity of Essence.

We must pass on now to the latest group of Tertullian's writings, three treatises written about the year 220 A.D., "on Modesty," "on Monogamy," and "on Fasting." As the titles imply, they deal with practical questions, and in them the peculiar teaching of Montanism is not merely touched upon incidentally, but forms the main purport. In no other writings of Tertullian is the tone so bitter, the teaching so rigid, and the handling of Scripture so forced. The author

[1] *Adversus Praxean*, c. 1.

is no longer a member of the Catholic Church; he has separated from it altogether; he belongs to a separate sect, the members of which call themselves the *Pneumatici*, men of the Spirit, while they despise ordinary Christians as being merely *Psychici*, men of the soul. We do not know what brought about Tertullian's final separation from the Church. Jerome tells us[1] that it was because of the envy and contumelious treatment of the clergy of the Church of Rome, that Tertullian became a Montanist. The statement is too vague to give us any certain information; it may perhaps refer to the bitter controversy in which —as we shall see directly—Tertullian was engaged with the ecclesiastical authorities at Rome on the question of restoring to Church fellowship those who had been guilty of mortal sin after baptism.

In the treatise "on Modesty," contrary to the teaching of his pre-Montanist work "on Repentance," he entirely forbids the restoration to Church fellowship of those who, after their baptism, had fallen into sins against the seventh commandment. Such sins he regards as apostasy for self-gratification, a far greater crime than apostasy from fear of torture and martyrdom. He makes a severe attack upon the church at Rome, of which he had spoken with so much respect in his book on the "Prescription of Heretics." In this church there was much laxity, and Calixtus, the bishop, had declared that, in virtue of his episcopal authority, he had power to pronounce absolu-

[1] *Catalogus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum*, c. 53.

tion over all sinners. Tertullian meets the decree with scorn. "The Sovereign Pontiff indeed, the bishop of bishops"—so he calls him ironically—"issues an edict. 'I,' says he, 'remit to them that have done penance the sins both of adultery and fornication.' What an edict, which cannot be inscribed, 'Well done!' And where shall this gracious message be posted up? On the very spot, I suppose, on the very gates of lust. There is the place for publishing penance of that sort, where the offence itself shall dwell. There is the place for reading the pardon, where men enter in the hope of it. But it is in the church that it is read, and in the church that it is pronounced, and—she is a virgin!"[1] Strange that the Bishop of Rome should soon afterwards have adopted the title "bishop of bishops," which Tertullian here gives him in the deepest scorn. But on the question at issue the view of Calixtus, and not that of Tertullian, prevailed; for, in spite of its higher moral standard, the latter view, in its rigid severity and its lack of compassion for the weak, was not according to the spirit of Christ, who never rejected a penitent sinner.

In his book "on Monogamy," Tertullian absolutely forbids a second marriage. Here again he abandons his earlier view, expressed in his treatise "to his Wife." In that treatise he had indeed expressed a decided preference for monogamy, but had nevertheless allowed a second marriage to those who could not rise to the loftier standard. In the later work he is

[1] *De Puaicitia*, c. 1.

confronted by the fact that St. Paul had permitted a second marriage. But Tertullian explains that this was a concession reluctantly allowed by the Apostle as a temporary compromise, because of the hardness of men's hearts. The Paraclete, speaking by the voice of the prophets, had now introduced a higher rule, and had definitely prohibited a second marriage. Besides, St. Paul, in his First Epistle to Timothy, had forbidden a second marriage to the clergy. All Christians are priests, and therefore this command applies to all.

His latest work is the treatise "on Fasting." In it he advocates the Montanist fasts; that is abstinence from all food, until the evening, every Wednesday and Friday; and for two weeks of the year abstinence from meat, wine, fruits, and from the baths. These fasts he wishes to impose as a binding rule upon all Christians. It will suffice to quote one passage as a specimen of the intense bitterness of tone which pervades the book. Addressing the Catholic Christians, who would not adopt the Montanist fasts, Tertullian says, "To you your belly is a god, your lungs a temple, your paunch a sacrificial altar, your cook the priest, your fragrant smell the Holy Spirit, your condiments spiritual gifts, and your vomiting prophecy."[1]

There are some men whose natural asperity becomes softened by advancing years; there are others in whom old age serves to bring out more sharply all the

[1] *De Jejunio*, c. 16.

angularities of their character. Tertullian was one of the latter. He is said by Jerome to have written many works more, which even in the next century were no longer in existence. He died in extreme old age; we may perhaps place his death about the year 240 A.D. This heroic champion of Christianity against the heathen power died, after all, not at the stake nor in the amphitheatre, as we might have expected, as he would probably himself have wished, but quietly in his bed.

And so we part from Tertullian. In his writings the man lives again before us. We see in him a character, vigorous and energetic, but with marked faults; not lovable, but always interesting. Once a Christian, he gave himself heart and soul to the faith which he had embraced; to contend for it was his life's work, and, side by side with this, to repel with the utmost severity whatever was hostile to it. A member of the fiery Punic race, he did nothing without passion. Therein lay both his strength and his weakness; his strength, for it was this passion which caused him to be so intensely in earnest, and which gave to his writings their incomparable force and eloquence; his weakness, for it was this same passion which led him into one-sided, exaggerated views, and which produced his bitterness of tone. The great mistake of his life was his adhesion to the Montanists. It was indeed very natural that he should have joined that body, for the Montanist standard of holiness coincided with his own aspira-

tions, and he yielded to the authority of the New Prophecy, sincerely believing it to be the voice of the Spirit of God. Yet the step was a mistaken one. Membership among the Montanists did not act beneficially either upon his views or upon his character; it increased his harshness, his vehemence, his unfairness towards those from whom he differed.

Christendom has, however, been just to his memory; and, in spite of the fact that in his later writings he attacked the Catholic Church, he has always been revered as one of her great teachers; and justly too, for the Church owes to him a large debt of gratitude. Not only was he the vigorous and courageous defender of the faith against attacks from without, but he was also a great exponent of Christian truth. Through Cyprian and Augustine—men who were very unlike Tertullian in some respects, but who carried forward his teaching—he has moulded the whole course of Western theology. It has followed along the track which he marked out for it; it has busied itself with the great topics which he dealt with, the doctrine of man, of sin, of salvation. Thus his influence has been far-reaching indeed.

Clement of Alexandria.

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CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA.[1]

On the first Easter day the Lord revealed Himself first to Mary Magdalene, the type of human love; then to St. Peter, the type of penitence; not till the day was far spent did He manifest Himself to the two travellers to Emmaus, the type of earnest thinkers striving to reach the truth through painful effort and patient discussion. The successive manifestations of the first Easter day are a parable of the stages of the Epiphany of the risen Lord to the world.

Speaking broadly, Christianity first gained a hold on the emotions and the conscience of men. It won its way in the home, in the market-place, in the camp. It bore the fruit of holy living and holy dying. But, as the second century wore on, a larger battle-field opened before it. The Church was Christ's apostle to *all* the Gentiles. It was a debtor to the wise as well as to the simple, to the Greeks as much as to the barbarians. It had to train, according to its new type and in its new power, philosophers and scholars as well as martyrs and saints. Christ came to redeem and to regenerate to God the whole of man—not only his emotions and conscience, but his intellect also.

[1] The references are to the pages of Potter's edition.

Christianity had to proclaim the Lord in the schools, and to leaven and consecrate human *thought*.

Alexandria was in an especial sense the scene of this conflict and of this victory. Let us try to form some idea of the battle-field.

Alexandria may be described as an epitome of the ancient world. Its society was cosmopolitan. The characteristic of its intellectual position was syncretism. Founded by Alexander the Great in 332 B.C., the city was from very early times, it would seem, divided into three districts, the Jewish, the Greek, the Egyptian. Commercially it was a busy port, the outlet of the Egyptian corn-trade. As such its importance in the Roman Empire was assured. For us its position as the progressive University of the ancient world is of greater interest. By the side of the *Serapeum* (cf. Clem. *Protrep.* chap. iv.), the temple of the Egyptian god with its monastic college, there rose under the patronage of the Ptolemies the *Museum* and the *Library*, the institutions, that is, of a University, where Greek philosophy and literature were studied. "Professors of every science were maintained at the public expense, or by endowments which had existed from the era of the Ptolemies. The academic life of Alexandria . . . was cast nearly in the type with which our modern ideas are most familiar."[1] Of all philosophies, however, that of Plato, based not on observation but on intuition, exercised the most potent fascination over

[1] Merivale, *History of the Romans under the Empire*, vol. viii. p. 234.

the prevalent modes of thought, and was in turn moulded by them.

On the other hand, the Jewish colony at Alexandria was a very large one. Philo, a contemporary of the Apostles, gives the number of Jews at Alexandria as a million, and tells us that two out of the five districts into which the city was divided were called Jewish (*in Flacc.* 971 ff.). To Alexandria the Jew brought his monotheistic faith and his sacred literature. The influence of this new environment on Jewish thought was of supreme importance. Philo, the typical Alexandrian Jew, sought to reconcile Jewish belief and Greek thought, the worship of Jehovah and the Platonic conception of absolute being (τὸ ὄν). He withdrew the Supreme Being from the world, and then between that Supreme Being, ineffable and incomprehensible, and the world of phenomena he found a link in his doctrine of the Logos (ὁ λόγος τοῦ ὄντος), the reason and the utterance of the Supreme. So at Alexandria the East and the West met, the religion of Israel and the philosophy of Greece, the revelation of the Jew and the speculation of the Gentile. They met, and the results of that meeting are influencing us still.

Such was Alexandria at the time of the earlier Apostolic triumphs, when "a certain Jew named Apollos, an Alexandrian by race, a learned man (ἀνὴρ λόγιος) . . . mighty in the Scriptures . . . fervent in the spirit" (Acts xviii. 24 f.), became at Corinth the fellow-worker of St. Paul.

As the second century passed on, the essential characteristics of Alexandria were intensified. Now more than ever it became the scene of a restless, anxious, bold, undisciplined intellectual life, which sometimes approached scepticism, sometimes, as in its fondness for magic, lapsed into superstition.

During this period we can mark three new departures in thought.

(1.) There was the nascent system, which afterwards was known by the name of Neo-platonism. As Philo had aimed at making religion a philosophy, so the Platonic teachers at Alexandria strove to transform philosophy into a religion. To the transcendentalism of Plato they added a mystic element. They taught that by meditation and discipline men could reach after, could indeed be absorbed into, the transcendental world of real absolute Being, to which Plato had borne witness. This new philosophy was not without its effect on Christian thought as we see it in Clement.

(2.) Alexandria was one of the cradles, one of the homes, of Gnosticism. Two of the subtlest of the Gnostics, Valentinus and Basilides, were connected with Alexandria. The Gnostics, to put the matter briefly, claimed to be the religious aristocracy, raised by their patent of intellect above the common herd of religious men. The centre of their system was *knowledge* (γνῶσις). They were those who *knew*, the τελεῖοι, the mature and perfect men. Gnosticism aimed at solving two insoluble problems: (1.) the

ontological problem—how the finite and material world could come from, and co-exist with, the infinite, spiritual God; (2.) the *moral* problem—how the world, in which evil dwells and reigns, could come from a good Creator (*πόθεν ἡ κακία*). Speaking broadly, we may say that they answered their *first* question by making the distance between God and the world infinite, and then bridging over the abyss by an endless series of intermediate powers; the *second*, by referring creation to the activity of one of these inferior beings. The Gnostic sects, essentially independent as they were of Christianity, yet absorbed Christian elements. In their *first* answer they found a place for Christ; in their *second*, a place for redemption. But with the Gnostics Christ was no longer unique; His humanity was no longer real. Redemption with them lost both its universality and its moral character, for some men were wholly material and could not be saved, while of the select few salvation was the necessary possession.

(3.) In such a society of earnest, impulsive, wayward thinkers, Christianity had to bear its characteristic witness.

Under these conditions and to meet these needs there grew up at Alexandria in early times (Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* v. 10) the far-famed *Catechetical School.* This school was the Christian counterpart of the pagan University. It united the functions of the lecture-room and of the Church. Its character was at least as much academic as ecclesiastical. Perhaps its

position is best understood by us if we notice that it had a close relation to four classes of persons:—

(*a.*) Those among the philosophic pagans who, though repelled by the crude and material views of uneducated Christians, yet desired to learn something of the Christian system;

(*b.*) The Gnostics, or at least those Christians who, attracted by the offer of an intellectual solution of the final problems of life, hovered on the borders of the Gnostic sects;

(*c.*) Those Christians who were preparing themselves for the work of Christian teachers;

(*d.*) The simpler Christians, who, whether in preparation for baptism or otherwise, needed to be taught the facts of the Christian creed.

The influence of the school largely depended on the personality of its chief. The type was fixed by the first head of the school whose name has come down to us—Pantænus. Three facts about his life are of special interest.

(i.) As a Christian he cultivated Greek philosophy. Origen (*ap.* Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* vi. 19, 13) defended his own practice by the example of Pantænus, "who before our days benefited many, having no small knowledge of the philosophers." Eusebius (v. 10) gives us the further detail that Pantænus once belonged to the Stoic school. He was, perhaps, the first prominent doctor of the Church who by his life bore witness to the Church's claim to assimilate truth from every quarter.

(ii.) "They say," to use the words of Eusebius (*Hist. Eccl.* v. 10), "that in his fervent zeal he showed such eagerness for the advancement of the divine word, that he was appointed herald of Christ's Gospel to the nations in the East, journeying as far as the country of the Indians." Thus he was a man of action as well as of thought—the first of scholar-missionaries.

(iii.) Pantænus was the teacher of Clement. Clement himself (*Strom.* i. 332) tells us that he reverently preserved memorials of those "blessed and truly illustrious teachers" to whom in his earlier life he had listened. The last of these in point of time, but "the first in power," in whom indeed "he found rest," was the teacher whom, to use his own words, "he hunted out in his hiding-place in Egypt." Eusebius, who had access to works of Clement lost to us, identifies this spiritual father of Clement with Pantænus (*Hist. Eccl.* v. 11).

This last point brings us to the main subject of this lecture—Clement.

Our information about Clement's life is meagre in the extreme. Where was his birthplace? If one account tells us that Alexandria was his home from the first, a more probable tradition makes Athens his native place.[1] If so, the very circumstances of his life typified that fusion of intellectual in-

[1] Epiphanius, *Hær.* xxxii. 6, Κλήμης ὃν φασί τινες Ἀλεξανδρέα, ἕτεροι δὲ Ἀθηναῖον.

fluences which through him, "the father of Greek theology" (Allen, *Continuity of Christian Thought*, p. 38), had so large a part in moulding Christian thought. Certainly the language of the passage just quoted from the *Stromateis* is most natural if Clement came as a stranger to Alexandria; it distinctly speaks of Greece as the starting-point of his quest.

But whatever the details of his early history, there is no doubt that Clement was one of the many in that age of dissatisfaction and unrest whose lives became a search after truth. In one passage (*Pæd.* ii. 205), mystically interpreting the washing of the Saviour's feet by the sinful woman, he says: "We, the sinners who have repented and believed on Him, to whom He has forgiven our sins, we are the tears." There is, however, nothing to lead us to suppose that Clement was stained with the grosser sins of paganism. He does not appear to have passed through any great moral or spiritual convulsion. His was a soul "naturally Christian." He "loved much" rather as the seeker whose search after divine truth has been abundantly blessed than as the penitent to whom "much had been forgiven." In the tract *Quis Dives Salvetur?* (chap. xxiii.), he puts into the Saviour's mouth an invitation to follow Him: "I regenerated thee, basely formed by the world for death; I freed thee, healed thee, ransomed thee. I will show thee the face of God, the good Father. Call not any one father upon earth; let the dead bury their dead; but do thou follow Me. . . . I am He that nurtures thee, giving

Myself to thee as bread, . . . and day by day infusing into thee the drink of immortality. I am the teacher of lessons which are higher than the heavens. For thee I endured the struggle with death. And I paid thy death which thou didst owe for thy former sins, and thy unbelief towards God." I do not stop to discuss the doctrinal bearing of the passage. What I wish to call your attention to is this, viz., the rarity of passages of this general tone in Clement. He assumes rather than emphasises the teaching of the Cross and the Resurrection. His own history, if we knew its details, would doubtless explain to us, at least in part, why his theology (with all its value and nobility) is partial and incomplete, and has little to say of some Christian facts and truths which lie very near the heart of Christendom.

Of Clement's life as a teacher at Alexandria (probably 190–203) we know but little. He was a presbyter of the Church (*Pæd.* i. 120). He became head of the Catechetical School. Origen was among his pupils. Early in the third century the persecution under Severus broke out. In the *Stromateis* (iv. 597) Clement deals with the question how a Christian should act in time of persecution. His calm and philosophic mind had but little sympathy with that almost fanatical desire for martyrdom which parodied Christian courage. "When Christ says (Matt. x. 23), 'When they persecute you in this city, flee into the next.' . . . He would have us the cause of harm to none, neither to ourselves nor to him who

would persecute and slay us. For in a certain sense Christ bids a man to be careful of himself; and he who disobeys is rash and foolhardy." It was therefore from no sudden fear, but from a deliberate sense of duty, that, when persecution arose, Clement, the most prominent teacher at Alexandria, literally obeyed the Lord's command and left the city. "If," he says in another noble passage (*Strom.* iv. 570), "confession to God is martyrdom, then every soul which liveth purely in the knowledge of God and in obedience to His commandments is a martyr, both in life and in word, howsoever it departs from the body. That soul pours out its faith like blood through the whole course of life."

The last time we catch a glimpse of Clement, we find him fulfilling a ministry of love. One of his old pupils, Alexander, Bishop of Cappadocia, was in prison for Christ's sake. Clement visited him there and confirmed his flock. Thence Clement goes to the church of Antioch as the bearer of a letter from Alexander, congratulating that church on the appointment of Asclepiades as its bishop (Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* vi. 11). This was in 211.

Though we know but little of Clement's history, we are on familiar terms with the man himself. His writings bring us face to face with him. When he describes the true Christian philosopher, we can hardly doubt that he is in large part drawing a picture of himself, at least of the man he wished and tried to be. In one passage (*Strom.* vii. 852)

he describes the devout scholar as one "brought very near to God, at once grave and cheerful in all things—*grave*, because he is ever turning himself towards the Deity; *cheerful*, as he bethinks him of the blessings which are his as man." Those two epithets, σεμνός and ἵλαρός, which might be used to portray our own George Herbert, bring Clement before our eyes. Clement "seems to me," wrote F. D. Maurice (*Ecclesiastical History of the First and Second Centuries*, p. 239), "that one of the old fathers whom we all should have reverenced most as a teacher, and loved best as a friend."

The three greatest of his works have come down to us. They form a connected series. Clement constantly applies to the Christian's growth in knowledge language drawn from the ancient mysteries. It can hardly be a mere coincidence that, as it has often been noticed, his three works correspond with the three stages of the Neo-Platonic course, themselves doubtless reproducing the stages of initiation into the pagan mysteries. These stages are Purification (ἀποκάθαρσις), Initiation (μύησις), Vision (ἐπόπτεια).

(1.) The earliest work is the "Hortatory Word (Discourse) to the Greeks" (λόγος προτρεπτικὸς πρὸς Ἕλληνας). We do not catch the full significance of the title unless we observe that Clement here hints at the high theological sense of the term "Word." He represents the Lord Himself as the living λόγος προτρεπτικός, the "Hortatory Word," summoning the

Greeks to leave the shames of paganism, and to learn of Him.

The discourse opens with a passage of lyric beauty. The minstrels of classic fable, Amphion and Arion, by their music drew after them savage monsters and the very stones. Christ is the true minstrel. His harp and lyre are men. He tunes them through the Holy Spirit. On this instrument of many tones He makes melody to God. Nay, Christ, who alone is both God and man, the author of all good things, He is Himself the New Song. This heavenly melody tames the fiercest monsters, and softens the hardest stones, making them gentle men.

After this opening, Clement (briefly to summarise the treatise) contrasts Christianity with the sensual vileness of pagan rites, and with the vague hopes of pagan poets and philosophers. Man is born for God. The Word calls men, tied and bound in the chains of ancient custom, from judgement and death to grace and life. He calls them to Himself, He who is (to quote but one phrase, which perhaps suggested to Keble the familiar line of his Evening Hymn) "the healthful Word, the Sun of the soul" (ὁ λόγος ὁ ὑγιής, ὅς ἐστιν ἥλιος ψυχῆς, *Cohort.* 60).

(2.) The second of Clement's works is called "The Tutor," "The Instructor" (ὁ παιδαγωγός). The *Pædagogus* (comp. 1 Cor. iv. 15, Gal. iii. 24), you will remember, was the slave who had constant charge of a boy, walked and worked with him, not at stated hours but at all times. On him depended the forma-

tion of habits and character. Such is the Word towards those who have obeyed His earlier call. The Word first summons men to become His; then He trains them in His ways.

The treatise is divided into three books. In the first of these Clement describes "The Tutor." He is "God in the form of man undefiled, minister to the Father's will, the unsullied image of God" (chap. ii. *sub init.*). His character as regards men is summed up in a single phrase; He is ὁ πάντα φιλάνθρωπος, the true friend of man (chap. i. *sub fin.*). We are His children. In one passage of exceeding beauty Clement develops the thought of the perpetual childhood of the Christian society, a childhood not of feebleness, "as they slanderously allege who are puffed up in respect to knowledge," but a childhood of freshness and promise. "In contrast," he says, "to the older people, we, the new people, are young (comp. *Strom.* vi. 762), in that we have learned God's new blessings. Ours is the exuberance of prime in this ageless youth, wherein we are ripe in intelligence; always young, and always gentle, and always new. For those who have been made partakers of the Word, who is new, must themselves be new; and that which partakes of immortality is wont to become like the incorruptible; so that the name of childhood's age is ours, a spring-time through all life, forasmuch as the truth which is in us cannot age." I do not know of any passage anywhere which reveals so intense, so exultant a sense of the regeneration which Christ's coming brought to a world

stricken with weariness and decrepitude. "The dew of thy birth is of the womb of the morning."

The teaching of the Word deals with life (*πρακτικὸς δὲ ὤν ὁ παιδαγωγός*, chap. i. *sub init.*). He trains his children both by chastisement and love in right conduct. The second and third books give the details of holy living. Nothing is too small for the Instructor's care. In the Christian life all is temperate, orderly, calm, simple. Take a few sentences as specimens. "We must avoid drunkenness as we avoid hemlock; for both drag men to death." "We must check immoderate laughter and excessive tears." Then, with almost grotesque particularity, "Whistling and sounds made on the fingers, noises by which servants are summoned, these are irrational signs, and must be avoided by rational men." "If any one has a fit of sneezing, he must not disturb those near him by the sound." "In a word, the Christian is given to calmness, quietness, tranquillity, peace."

The treatise closes with a hymn to the Pædagogus.

(3.) The third and by far the fullest of Clement's works is called *Στρωματεῖς*. This title, which means literally, it appears, "bags for holding bed-clothes," is an illustration of the quaintness of Clement's fancy. It is meant to express the miscellaneous, unsystematic character of the work. Clement compares it in one place (vi. *sub init.*) to a meadow where all kinds of flowers grow at random; in another (vii. *sub fin.*) to a shady shaggy mountain planted with trees of every sort. This arrangement, or rather this want of

arrangement, is deliberate. The purpose of the treatise is to kindle sparks in the mind of one who has passed through the earliest stages of instruction, and is now fit for higher knowledge. It is a series of essays rather suggestive than systematic and exhaustive.

The word "notes" (*ὑπομνήματα*) is indeed the term which Clement uses again and again to describe the treatise. We can hardly doubt that in the *Stromateis* we have a somewhat unmethodical digest of somewhat unmethodical lectures actually delivered in the Catechetical School.[1]

We shall presently draw largely on the seven[2] books of the *Stromateis* in the summary of Clement's teaching which we shall attempt to make. Here it must suffice briefly to say that they unfold the outlines of a Christian philosophy—how faith is related to knowledge; how Christianity meets all the needs and instincts of man; and that they draw the picture of the Christian philosopher, the true Gnostic. For, with characteristic boldness, Clement does not hesitate boldly to claim this title (Gnostic), which the heretics had tried to appropriate to themselves, and to describe thereby the devout scholar and philosopher of the Church.

[1] The discussions of the *στρωματεῖς* were continued in another treatise, the *ὑποτυπώσεις* (the "Outlines"; cf. 1 Tim. i. 16, 2 Tim. i. 13); but of this only a few fragments, containing comments on the Catholic Epistles, have come down to us.

[2] The so-called eighth book, a treatise on Logic, seems to have no right to its position.

Let us note four general characteristics of Clement's doctrinal position.

(1.) His teaching is essentially unsystematic. He does not aim at expressing or co-ordinating all Christian truth. His works stand in complete contrast to such rigid and formal systems of Christian doctrine as we find in the treatises of the Scholastic theologians of the Middle Ages, or, for example, in Calvin's "Institutes." It is no *Summa Theologiæ*. Thus, to take one important point, Clement has little to say of the Christian *society*. When he speaks of the Church, it is rather in the language of metaphor. Thus in one place (*Strom.* iv. 642), borrowing an image of the Stoics, he speaks of the Church as "a city governed by the Word, a city upon earth, impregnable, free from despotism; the Divine will on earth as in heaven." He accepts and honours the threefold ministry as part of the environment of Christian life, but he does not stop to analyse its significance. Thus he ventures to say (*Strom.* vi. 793) that the true Christian philosopher is "counted in the company of the Apostles, is indeed a presbyter of the Church, and a true deacon of God's will, if he do and teach the things of the Lord, though he be not appointed by men." We cannot but be conscious, as we study Clement's works, that his teaching lacks an element of strength and permanence, because he does not fully recognise the important fact that Christian truth has been committed for guardianship and for propagation to a society divinely commissioned and

divinely organised. A clearer view as to the life and the work of the Church would have checked, we may believe, the somewhat supercilious individualism which mars his picture of the "true Gnostic."

(2.) Clement's theological language is untechnical. His contemporary, Tertullian, at Carthage, laid the foundation of the theological terminology of Latin Christendom. I doubt whether Greek theology owes anything of its singularly rich and precise vocabulary to Clement's influence.

(3.) His teaching is scriptural; Scripture is the ultimate basis of his doctrine. "There is nothing," he says (*Strom.* v. 670), "like hearkening to the Word Himself, who infuses into us a richer intelligence by the Scripture." He speaks of himself as "showing that the Scriptures which we have believed are decisive by reason of the authority of the Almighty" (*κυρίας οὔσας ἐξ αὐθεντίας παντοκρατορικῆς*, *Strom.* iv. 564). But the true teacher differs from the false in that he interprets Scripture according to "the Church's rule" (*κανὼν ἐκκλησιαστικός*; see, *e.g.*, *Strom.* vi. 804). What was this "rule"? It was an unwritten tradition abiding in the Church, entrusted first by the Lord to the Apostles, handed down from generation to generation (*ἡ κατὰ διαδοχὰς εἰς ὀλίγους ἐκ τῶν ἀποστόλων ἀγραφῶς παραδοθεῖσα*, *Strom.* vi. 771; compare especially *Strom.* i. 322), the source of Clement's own deepest utterances, a tradition not supplementing, but interpreting, Scripture.

Let me give one example. Clement is interpreting

the petition for forgiveness in the Lord's Prayer. He argues that man must forgive, because no one is without responsibility for his brother's sins. "Now they say," he continues, "that in the Traditions Matthias the Apostle says, 'If the neighbour of an elect man sin, the elect himself has sinned;' for had he so behaved as the Word commandeth, his neighbour would have so reverenced his life that he had not sinned" (*Strom.* vii. 882).

(4.) Clement is uncontroversial. His writings throughout deal with controversies, but there is in them little of the common temper and method of controversy. He is a Christian apologist; but he has "outgrown the attitude of simple defence." His Apology is an "appeal to the relations between the Christian revelation and the sum of experience, rather than to any separable and separated credentials."[1] He is the defender because he is the interpreter of the faith.

The way has now been prepared for us to fix our thoughts on the subject which is the golden thread running through all Clement's works.

To Clement the Incarnation is the centre of all history, all life, all thought. In it all truths converge and find their complete interpretation. For it the whole course of human action and of human speculation was the divinely-ordered preparation. To it all subsequent history looks back. It was the restitution of the world, and Clement contemplates it as pregnant with infinite hope. "Behold, saith the Word, I make

[1] Dr. Hort, *Hulsean Lectures*, pp. xxx. f.

new things, things which eye saw not, nor ear heard, which entered not into the heart of man: for by new eye, new ear, new heart whatsoever things can be seen or heard or apprehended, these things, by their faith and knowledge, the disciples of the Lord spiritually say and hear and do" (*Strom.* ii. 436).

In speaking of the Incarnation and all that it means, there is one term always on Clement's lips. Christ is the Logos, the Word of God. However elaborate the thoughts which in Clement gather round the term, with him the term itself is simple. Earlier Christian teachers, Justin Martyr and Theophilus of Antioch, following the example of Philo, had made a theological use of the ambiguity of the term λόγος, which means both *reason* and *speech.* They had distinguished between the "immanent Word" (ὁ λόγος ὁ ἐνδιάθετος), the Reason which is *in* God, and the "exterior Word" (ὁ λόγος ὁ προφορικός), the Word, that is, as the Revealer. Clement expressly refuses to recognise any such distinction. "The Word of the Father of all is not the exterior Word (ὁ προφορικός), but He is the Wisdom and the Goodness of God made most plain, yea, the Power which is all-sovereign and truly divine" (*Strom.* v. 646; comp. *Cohort.* p. 86: ὁ θεῖος λόγος, ὁ φανερώτατος ὄντως λόγος). In the Word, that is, men see the inner mind of God. He is the full and complete revelation of the Father.

Our words at best are the partial expression of our thoughts. It is not so with God: His thought and His Word are one. "Inter animum nostrum et

uerba" (to quote some words from Augustine's *de Fide et Symbolo*, § 4), "quibus eundem animum ostendere conamur, plurimum distat. . . . Deus autem Pater, qui uerissime se indicare animis cognituris et uoluit et potuit, hoc ad seipsum indicandum genuit quod est Ipse qui genuit." The idea finds expression at the close of a characteristic passage of Browning (*The Ring and the Book*, "*The Pope*," 376):—

> "He, the Truth, is too
> The Word."

In this conception Clement found alike for his spirit and for his intellect satisfaction and repose.

We must always remember, when we endeavour to make a connected survey of Clement's teaching, that we are reducing to a system what in its first presentation was essentially unsystematic. With this caution in our mind, we will make an attempt to review Clement's doctrine of the Word under three heads: (1.) The Word and Creation; (2.) The Word preparing men for His Advent; (3.) The Word the Instructor of believers.

(1.) The Word and Creation, *i.e.*, (*α*) the world; (*β*) man.

(*α*) The world. On more than one occasion Clement promises to set forth in full his view of creation (*Strom.* iv. 564, vi. 828). In his extant works he does not treat of the subject at length; but he supplies hints how he would have developed his

conception. "God in essence (*κατ' οὐσίαν*) is far off; for how can the Uncreated draw near to the created? But He is very near in regard to His power, which embraces all things" (*ἡ τὰ πάντα ἐγκεκόλπισται, Strom.* ii. 431). Elsewhere he explains that it is through the Word that God made the world and is present in the world. "The Word coming forth (*προελθὼν*) was the author of creation, and afterwards He generateth Himself also, when 'the Word became flesh,' that He might be seen (*Strom.* v. 654)." "They (the Stoics) allege that God permeates all being" (*i.e.*, they teach a pantheistic doctrine of the world), "but we call God alone Creator—Creator, that is, by the Word. That which is said in Wisdom (vii. 24) deceived them: *'She passeth and goeth through all things by reason of her pureness;'* for they understood not that this is said of Wisdom, God's first creation" (*τῆς πρωτοκτίστου τῷ θεῷ, Strom.* v. 699). "The nature of the Son, most near to Him who alone is All-Sovereign, that it is which ordereth all things according to the Father's will, and guideth the Universe, working all things with untiring and unfailing power; looking on [the fulfilment of] His hidden designs. For the Son of God never at any time leaveth His watch-tower (*τῆς αὐτοῦ περιωπῆς*); for He never passeth from place to place, but He is always in all places, and is nowhere comprehended. . . . To Him each army of angels and gods is subject, the Word of the Father, who hath received the holy stewardship (*τὴν ἁγίαν οἰκονομίαν*) by reason of

Him who subjected [all things to Him]" (*Strom.* vii. 821).

Thus while Clement rejected the Stoic doctrine which identified God with the world, he taught that God, infinitely transcending the world, was yet through His Word present in nature, guiding, sustaining, quickening. His doctrine in a word was that of the immanence of the Divine Word in the Universe. This is the typical doctrine of Greek theology.[1] It is clearly derived from the New Testament—*τὰ πάντα ἐν αὐτῷ συνέστηκε* (Col. i. 17); *φέρων τε τὰ πάντα τῷ ῥήματι τῆς δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ* (Heb. i. 3); *ὃ γέγονεν ἐν αὐτῷ ζωὴ ἦν* (John i. 4). The revival of this view of God's relation to the world (see especially the late Mr. Aubrey Moore's Essay on "the Christian Doctrine of God" in *Lux Mundi*) is a matter for deepest thankfulness and for far-reaching hope. Everything that evolution has taught or can teach about the world must be welcomed by the man who believes that God is not merely an occasional visitor in the world, but that through His Word He is *in it;* that all force, all energy, all growth, all life are but manifestations of His abiding presence.

(*β*) From Clement's doctrine of creation we turn to his doctrine of man.

"The image of God," he says (*Cohort.* p. 78), "is His Word; the true Son of the [divine] mind is the divine Word, archetypal light of light; and the

[1] See, *e.g.*, *Epistle to Diognetus*, vii. 2; Athanasius, *de Incar.* 8, 17. Compare *Lux Mundi* (1890), pp. 100 f., 192.

image of the Word is man. The true mind is the mind which is in man, which for this cause is said to have been made after the image and after the likeness of God, assimilated in the thoughts of his heart to the Word, and so endowed with reason" (λογικός).

Elsewhere Clement mentions with approval the view of some that man had the divine *image* bestowed on him at creation, and may hope to receive the divine *likeness* hereafter at his consummation (κατὰ τὴν τελείωσιν, *Strom.* ii. 499). In one passage of the "Hortatory Discourse" (p. 59), after quoting some words from Plato's *Timæus*—"It is a hard task to discover the Father and Maker of this Universe, and, when you have discovered Him, impossible to express Him"—he turns to the old philosopher: "Nobly said, Plato; thou hast touched the truth; nay, be not weary, . . . for absolutely in all men a divine effluence has been instilled." Again (*Strom.* v. 698): "Away with the thought that man is destitute of the idea of God (ἄμοιρον θείας ἐννοίας), seeing that, as it is recorded in Genesis, man partook of the divine inbreathing (τοῦ ἐμφυσήματος), participating in a being purer than that which belongs to any other living thing."

Thus in Clement's view every man is by nature akin to God; every man is endowed with the capacity of knowing God. For him, unlike the Gnostic or the Calvinist, there is a Catholic Gospel of creation. For Clement the Bible begins with the *first*, not the *third* chapter of Genesis. The starting-point of

his theology is God's creation of man in His image, not the Fall. Man's affinity to God has been obscured; it has not been destroyed.

This view of man's nature suggests the true remedy for what Bishop Westcott (*Essays in the History of Religious Thought in the West*, p. 246) calls "the evils of that Africanism which has been dominant in Europe since the time of Augustine." "The centre," if I may still quote from the same writer, "of [Augustine's] whole dogmatic theory is sin. In his greatest work he writes 'Of the City of God,' and he draws at the same time the portraiture of a rival 'City of the Devil,' equally stable and enduring."

Here Greek theology, starting with God's purpose for man in creation, is profounder, more reverent than the later teaching which prevailed for so many centuries in Latin Christendom. It is also surely more practical. It is the charter of missionary and evangelistic work.

(2.) The Word preparing men for His Advent.

The Preincarnate Word was the Teacher of men. Participating in the nature of the Word, men were by creation λογικοί—ready for the reception of the teaching of the λόγος. In many ways the Word prepared the world for His coming. "For in truth," Clement says (*Strom.* vi. 793), "there was but one saving covenant, reaching from the foundation of the world to ourselves, which in different generations and at different times we regard as differing as to the way in which it was given. It follows that there is one unchanging

gift of salvation from the one God, through the one Lord, conferring benefits on men in divers ways (πολυτρόπως). For which cause the wall of partition which separateth Jew and Greek is done away, that there may be a chosen people (εἰς περιούσιον λαόν). And thus both [Jew and Greek] attain unto the unity of the faith; and the election of both is one."

To the Jews were given "the covenants of the Lord" (αἱ διαθῆκαι αἱ κυριακαί, *Strom.* vi. 824), through Moses and the Prophets. "Moses," to quote one pregnant phrase, "was a living law (νόμος ἔμψυχος), guided (κυβερνώμενος) by the good Word" (*Strom.* i. 421).

But God had direct dealings with the Gentiles as well as with the Jews. Clement holds that God through many elementary stages educated the nations for the reception of the perfect truth in Christ.

God dealt with men as we deal with little children, giving them an inferior gift to save them from worse mischief. "God," Clement boldly says in one place (*Strom.* vi. 795), "gave them for worship (εἰς θρησκείαν) the sun and the moon and the stars, which God made for the nations, saith the Law (Deut. iv. 19), that they might not be wholly godless, and so wholly perish; but they, being unthankful for this commandment, gave themselves over to graven images, and unless they repent they shall be judged."

But Clement's position towards Greek philosophy is the characteristic trait in his view of the preparation of the world for the coming of the Saviour.

In the early Church three opinions were current as to Greek philosophy:—

(*a.*) It was held by many writers of the early Church that the Greek philosophers borrowed their highest teaching from the Books of the Jews. This is sometimes the view which Clement takes. "There is then," he once says (*Strom.* i. 369), "in Greek philosophy, stolen as it were by Prometheus, a little fire, fit to give light if duly fanned into a flame." Of this supposed theft he interpreted our Lord's words: "All that ever came before Me were thieves and robbers" (John x. 8; see, e.g., *Strom.* i. 366, ii. 428).

(*b.*) Some, like Tatian among the Greek Apologists, and Tertullian, the first great Latin Christian writer, condemned philosophy as essentially evil. This view became the inheritance of the school of Antioch, and is found, though perhaps in a somewhat modified form, in the popular and practical homilies of Chrysostom. Clement indignantly rejects it. Did some say that philosophy was from the devil? (*Strom.* vi. 773). Clement's answer is clear. Philosophy tended to make men virtuous. That which produces a good effect must so far itself be good, and so far must come from Him who is good (*Strom.* vi. 823).

(*c.*) Some, like Justin Martyr, regarded philosophy as a gift of God to the Greeks, the outgrowth of that "seed of the Word which is inborn in every race of man" (Justin, *Apol.* ii. 8, 13). This was Clement's view, and it was that of the great teachers of Alexandria who came after him; only he gave to this view bold and

characteristic expression. Philosophy was nothing less than a divine covenant. "Speaking generally," he says (*Strom.* vi. 773), "we shall not be far wrong if we say that all things necessary and profitable for life come from God, and that philosophy was given to the Greeks as a covenant peculiarly their own (διαθήκην οἰκείαν αὐτοῖς), a foundation of the philosophy which is according to Christ." One other passage from the many which might be quoted must suffice. "The one and only God was known by the Greeks in a Gentile fashion, by the Jews in a Jewish fashion, by us (Christians) in a new and spiritual way. It is the same God who gave both the covenants, who vouchsafed philosophy to the Greeks, whereby the Almighty is glorified among the Greeks. So then from Greek training, as from that of the Law, those who accept faith are being gathered together into the one race of the saved people. . . . As God willed to save the Jews by giving them prophets, so also among the Greeks He raised up their best men to be their prophets in their own tongue" (*Strom.* vi. 762). Philosophy, he ventures to say, "*justified*" the Greeks (*Strom.* i. 331, 377).[1]

But Clement, with all his reverence for Greek philosophy, was deeply conscious that its best teachings were "broken lights," and that not all its teachings were good. Thus in one passage (*Strom.* vi. 774)

[1] See for whole subject Bishop Westcott's *Gospel of Life*, pp. 114 ff., with the next chapter (vi.), which deals with the Pre-Christian Book Religions (China, India, Persia).

he speaks of tares being sown in Greek philosophy by the Evil One, instancing the godless and sensual system of Epicurus as a growth alien to "the husbandry granted of God to the Greeks." In another passage he says explicitly that by "philosophy" he does not mean the doctrines of any one particular sect, but whatever has been rightfully said by all and any, all lessons of righteousness and godly knowledge (*Strom.* i. 338). As in the old fable the Bacchanals tore Pentheus limb from limb, so have the different sects of philosophers rent into fragments the one truth, each boasting that its own fragment is the whole. "But," he adds with the exultation of Christian faith, "all things are illumined by the dawn of the light" (*Strom.* i. 349).

So then in Clement's view philosophy was a gift of God to the Greeks, a light; but it differed essentially from the true light of the Gospel, "the barbarian philosophy," as Clement calls it in a noble paradox. It was partial; it was weak; it was local and transitory.

It was partial. "The most exact philosophers of the Greeks," he says (*Strom.* i. 374), "discern God but in a reflection, as we see an image (φαντασία) in the water." The teaching of the Greeks is elementary (στοιχειώδης), that according to the Christ is perfect (*Strom.* vi. 799). The former is like a flight of steps which leads towards, but does not conduct into, the upper room of truth (*Strom.* i. 378).

It was weak. "Greek philosophy attains not the greatness of truth, aye, and is utterly weak (ἐξασθενεῖ)

to perform the Lord's commands" (*Strom.* i. 366). It lacked moral power.

It was transitory and local. In a striking passage at the close of *Stromateis* vi., Clement contrasts the destinies of Greek philosophy and of Christianity. "The word of our Teacher tarried not in Judæa, as philosophy tarried in Greece. . . . If any ruler whatsoever were to forbid Greek philosophy, it perishes that moment. But as for our teaching, from its first proclamation kings and despots and rulers in divers quarters, and governors with all their armies and with an innumerable company of men, forbid it, making war against us, and try as best they can to cut it off; but it blossoms the more; for it dies not, as though it were human teaching; nor, as though it were a gift without strength, does it fade away, for no gift of God is without strength; but it abideth, as that which cannot be forbidden, though prophecy saith of it that it shall be persecuted to the end."

The world on which Clement looked forth is narrow compared with our world; the sum of human experience of which he could take account small as compared with that which falls within our knowledge. But according to his opportunity Clement witnesses to truths vital to ourselves. On the fulfilment by the English Church of her characteristic task as a missionary Church, we may almost believe that the evangelization of the world depends. It is of the first importance for members and ministers of such a Church to remember that in the past God has "fulfilled Himself in many ways." The

several nations have been charged each with its proper function in preparing the way for the reception of His final revelation in Christ, and we must believe that each will bear its proper part in interpreting and illuminating the one truth. We shall not view with a half-disguised fear and suspicion the science, still young and so sometimes perhaps still wilful, of the comparative study of religions, if we have learned from Clement that their philosophies are in a real sense a dispensation of God, that every fragment of the truth which they retain, everything in them which makes for righteousness and charity and reverence, are the inspiration of the Word, and may, as Clement said, become the foundations of the philosophy which is according to Christ; if a greater than Clement, himself the chosen pupil of the Light, has taught us that "the true light lighteth every man."

(3.) The Word the teacher of believers.

The coming of the Word, the absolute and perfect Teacher, made possible a new perfection of human life. This perfection is attained in true knowledge (γνῶσις, ἐπιστήμη). The crown, the first-fruits of this new creation, is the true Gnostic, the true Christian philosopher.[1]

But, you will say, have we not here rank Gnosti-

[1] From this point I shall use the word *Gnostic* in Clement's sense, as meaning the Christian scholar and philosopher. It is remarkable that Clement regarded the difference between his Gnostic and the ordinary believer as a difference of kind rather than of degree. He looked upon him very much as the Stoics regarded their "wise man," and, I may add, as some of the sects regard the "converted man."

cism? Has not the pride of intellect, from which it was one purpose of Christianity to set men free, effected an entrance within the citadel of the Church? It must be admitted once for all that not seldom is Clement betrayed into the use of language which is not far removed from that of the self-satisfied Stoic or Gnostic; indeed, he often manifestly adopts their modes of speech.[1] It is true that, in his anxiety to claim the intellect for Christ, he sometimes seems to forget what St. Paul calls "the meekness and gentleness of Christ" (2 Cor. x. 1). He speaks of the ordinary simple believers with a tone of disparagement, as *οἱ κοινοὶ ἄνθρωποι* (*Strom.* vii. 859), *οἱ κοινότερον πεπιστευκότες* (*Strom.* vii. 861), *οἱ ἁπλῶς πιστοί* (*Strom.* vi. 796). Something, however, must be allowed for the fact that, as Clement hints, he was the object of bitter attack on the part of some Christians who disparaged human learning—those whom he refers to as "the fault-finders" (*Strom.* i. 327, 376), who "demand bare faith and nothing else, hoping, while bestowing no care on the vine, to gather clusters from the very first" (*Strom.* i. 341).

Further, with Clement "knowledge" is very far from being a merely intellectual quality: it is moral and spiritual also. He wholly differs from the Gnostic heretics in the position which he assigns to faith. In opposition to their fatalism, he again and again speaks of faith as *ἑκούσιος*—a voluntary assent. It is

[1] *E.g.*, *πᾶσα πρᾶξις γνωστικοῦ μὲν κατόρθωμα, τοῦ δὲ ἁπλῶς πιστοῦ μέση πρᾶξις λέγοιτ' ἂν* (*Strom.* vi. 796). The Gnostic is *αὐτάρκης* (*Strom.* vii. 857).

for him "the ear of the soul" (*Strom.* v. 643), "a reasonable judgement" (*κρίσις εὔλογος*, *Strom.* i. 320), "the touchstone of knowledge" (*κριτήριον ἐπιστήμης*, *Strom.* ii. 436). Though faith is "elementary" (*στοιχειωδεστέρα*), yet it is as necessary to the Gnostic as breath is to the living man (*Strom.* ii. 445). Faith is the foundation on which is built up the superstructure of "knowledge," which he defines in Platonic language as "the soul's sight of the things which truly are" (*θέα τίς τῆς ψυχῆς τῶν ὄντων*, *Strom.* vi. 774). Faith supplies the material on which knowledge works.[1] All indeed is summed up in some words which Clement loves to quote from the LXX. of Isa. vii. 9: "Unless ye believe, ye shall in no wise understand" (*ἐὰν μὴ πιστεύσητε, οὐδὲ μὴ συνῆτε*, *Strom.* i. 320, ii. 432, 437; see especially *Strom.* vi. 794, vii. 864).

At the close of *Stromateis* vi., Clement speaks of himself as "fashioning a statue of the Gnostic," which should show his "greatness and moral beauty." A very large part of the *Stromateis* is indeed occupied with the delineation of the devout Christian scholar. Noble and stimulating as the picture is, sometimes, at any rate, we must admit that Clement lapses into language which reminds us too well of that of the rhetoricians, a worthless class of persons for whom Clement feels, and does not hesitate to express, a most genuine contempt. "They are," he once wittily says, "like old shoes which have come

[1] *γνῶσις* may be described as *πίστις ἐπιστημονική* as opposed to *πίστις δοξαστική* (*Strom.* ii. 454).

to pieces, and only the tongue remains" (*Strom.* i. 328).

Three aspects, however, of Clement's Christian scholar are of abiding meaning. They often remind us of the teaching of later mysticism, and of that of our own Cambridge Platonists.[1] The life of the true Gnostic is (i.) a consecration of knowledge; (ii.) a discipline of self; (iii.) a communion with God.

(i.) The Gnostic's life is a consecration of knowledge.

The chief subject of the Gnostic's study is Scripture. He indeed, as Clement says, is "one who has grown old in the Scriptures themselves" (*ἐν αὐταῖς καταγηράσας ταῖς γραφαῖς, Strom.* vii. 896). To the Gnostic the Scriptures are literally "pregnant with instruction" (*κεκύηκασιν αἱ γραφαί, Strom.* vii. 891).

The Gnostic's reading of Scripture, according to Clement, must be *scholarly*. "It is important," he says (*Strom.* i. 342), "to differentiate ambiguous terms and synonymous expressions in the Testaments."

The Gnostic's study of Scripture must be *comprehensive*. The simple believer may gather instruction from isolated passages; the Gnostic must take a broader view. To use Clement's metaphor, simple faith reads Scripture letter by letter (*πρὸς τὸ γράμμα*); the Gnostic's interpretation of Scripture "is likened to reading according to their combinations" (*Strom.* vi. 806).

But the Gnostic's characteristic function is to pierce

[1] See Bishop Westcott's Essay on Benjamin Whichcote, in *Essays in the History of Religious Thought in the West.*

to the inner spiritual meaning of the letter. "The style of the Scriptures," he says (*Strom.* vi. 804), "is essentially parabolic; for the Lord also Himself, though He was not of the world (*οὐκ ὢν κοσμικός*), yet came to men as though He were of the world" (*ὡς κοσμικός*). Here Clement touches on a profound thought, developed by his greater pupil Origen (*Philocal.* xv.). In Scripture we have a kind of Incarnation. God clothes a revelation of Himself in the fleshly garment of human language and human literature. We must neither deny nor rest in the outward form.

Starting from these principles, Clement insists on what he calls *σαφήνεια γνωστική* (*Strom.* vi. 807), *i.e.*, a spiritual, mystical interpretation of the Bible. To illustrate and to discuss his method would make too large a demand upon our time; nor is it necessary to attempt this, for Clement's method was systematised by Origen, and to Origen a separate lecture is devoted.

Thus the Gnostic, like the priest of the English Church, was to be "diligent in the reading of Holy Scriptures." He was also, in Clement's view, to give himself to "such studies as help to the knowledge of the same." To "such studies," Clement gives a wide meaning. His own pages, like those of Jeremy Taylor (who has many points of resemblance to Clement), teem with curious learning of every kind. His practice rests on his convictions. "I count him a true scholar," he says (*Strom.* i. 342), "who

brings everything to bear upon the truth. From geometry and music and grammar and from philosophy itself he culls what is of service, and so guards the faith against attack."

Clement shews us that all true knowledge and all culture are part of the Christian's inheritance; that all sciences are the handmaids of theology, the queen of sciences.

(ii.) The true Gnostic's life is a life of *self-discipline*. He is characterised by holiness as much as by "knowledge." There is a γνωστικὴ τελειότης (*Strom.* vi. 792). "It is conduct," he says (*Strom.* iii. 531), "which approves those who know the commandments. As is the teaching, such should be the life. For the tree is known by its fruits, not by its flowers or its blossoms."

The holiness of the Gnostic differs, according to Clement, from the holiness of the ordinary believer in regard both to its *extent* and its *motive*. On the one hand, the ordinary believer attains his perfection if he abstains from evil. The Gnostic's holiness is positive; it is εὐποιΐα (*Strom.* vi. 770). On the other hand, the Gnostic cultivates holiness, not from fear of punishment or in hope of reward, but from love to God. "Doing good," he says (*Strom.* iv. 626), "out of love (ἡ δι' ἀγάπην εὐποιΐα), because of the beauty of right doing, that only is the Gnostic's choice."

Using the language of mysticism, Clement habitually speaks of the Gnostic's abstraction from the things of

sense. He is as a man on a long journey; he regards his body only as a wayside inn (*Strom.* iv. 640). Nay, to him the flesh is dead; his body is a tomb, which he consecrates to be an holy temple to the Lord (*Strom.* iv. 627).

Again and again Clement claims for the true Gnostic what the Stoic philosopher claimed for "the wise man"—*ἀπάθεια* (freedom from emotion); only with Clement the word has perforce lost its tone of cold selfishness and haughty isolation. "The Lord," Clement says in one remarkable passage (*Strom.* vi. 775), "was absolutely without emotion (*ἁπαξαπλῶς ἀπαθής*); in Him no impulse of the feelings (*κίνημα παθητικόν*) ever entered, either pleasure or grief. . . . The disciple strives to become like his Master and to attain to this freedom from emotion" (*εἰς ἀπάθειαν*). The true Gnostic reaches his ethical goal, not when he has gained a firm mastery over his desires and passions, but when he has annihilated them.

So Clement is led on one further step. He ventures to speak of those who live "*sinlessly* and in Gnostic fashion" (*ἀναμαρτήτως καὶ γνωστικῶς*, *Strom.* vi. 790, comp. iv. 573).

The exaggerations in the teaching of good men have always a sad but instructive interest. The source of Clement's error is not far to seek. The picture of an emotionless Christ, knowing neither pleasure nor grief, is at hopeless variance with the Gospels. It has its root in a false view of human nature. Clement, without knowing it, has fallen into

the mistake of his opponents, the heretical Gnostics; he joins his voice with theirs in disparaging the body, the bodily nature, as though it were not the work of God. He fails to see that the Incarnation consecrated, and did not condemn or destroy, the body. He has not read the Pauline paradox that the body of the Christian must be a "living sacrifice" (Rom. xii. 1).

But all his exaggerations notwithstanding, Clement impressively teaches us that the Christian student must follow after holiness, that true thinking must pass at once into true living.

(iii.) The Gnostic's life is a life of communion with God. The springs which feed the current of his life rise above.

Prayer is the atmosphere in which his life is lived. "Some," he says (*Strom.* vii. 854), "assign fixed hours to prayer, as the third, and the sixth, and the ninth. But the Gnostic prays all his whole life long, by prayer endeavouring to be with God. . . . Prayer, to speak somewhat boldly, is talking with God" (*ὁμιλία πρὸς τὸν θεὸν ἡ εὐχή*).

"We live our life," he says (*Strom.* vii. 852), "as a festival, persuaded that God is in every way everywhere present. As we till the ground we give thanks; as we sail the sea we sing hymns" (cf. p. 861). "Other men pray for continuance of health, the Gnostic that his perception of God (*θεωρίαν*) may increase and abide with him" (*Strom.* vii. 859; comp. p. 857).

"That his perception of God may increase"—this

indeed is all his desire. Clement felt to the full the thought expressed in that wonderful epigram of Irenæus (iv. xx. 7): "Gloria Dei uiuens homo, uita autem hominis uisio Dei." "To him that hath there shall be added," says Clement (*Strom.* vii. 865); "to faith knowledge, to knowledge love, to love the inheritance. And the inheritance is given when a man hangs on the Lord (κρεμασθῇ τοῦ κυρίου), by faith, by knowledge, and by love, and ascends with Him where is the God and Guardian of our faith and love. . . . Knowledge at length brings the man now pure in heart to the supreme (κορυφαῖον) place of rest, teaching him to behold (ἐποπτεύειν) God face to face with knowledge and apprehension (ἐπιστημονικῶς καὶ καταληπτικῶς); for therein is the perfecting (ἡ τελείωσις) of the Gnostic soul, when having passed beyond all purification and service it is with the Lord, where it is continually subjected to Him." This mystic passage is a specimen of many such. You will have noticed in it the word ἐποπτεύειν. It is the term which expresses the final stage of initiation into religious mysteries (comp. the use of the word in 2 Pet. i. 16; 1 Pet. ii. 12, iii. 2). Clement often characteristically reclaims it from pagan or from Platonist, and uses it to shadow forth the goal of the Gnostic course in the vision of God.

There is one blessing more in store. Clement (*Strom.* ii. 482), referring to a passage in the *Theætetus*, dwells on Plato's thought that "the end of happiness is becoming like unto God as far as

possible" (ὁμοίωσιν θεῷ κατὰ τὸ δυνατόν). This ὁμοίωσις is consummated by the ἐπόπτεια. "The activity of the perfected Gnostic is this, that he converses with God through the great High Priest, becoming like the Lord according to the measure of his power (ἐξομοιούμενον εἰς δύναμιν τῷ κυρίῳ), through his absolute service to God" (*Strom.* vii. 835). The vision of God is assimilation to God (cf. 1 John iii. 2[1]). He who sees God becomes "partaker of the divine nature." To express this ὁμοίωσις, Clement not seldom uses a type of phrase to which our theological vocabulary has no parallel. Throughout life the Gnostic's soul, "receiving the Lord's power, studies to be God" (μελετᾷ εἶναι θεός, *Strom.* vi. 797). He is θεοποιούμενος (*Strom.* vi. 803; comp. *Cohort.* 89 with note). The attainment of this θεοποίησις is the consummation of his being. Such expressions appear to us so bold that we hesitate literally to translate them. Yet Greek theology (see examples in Suicer, *Thesaurus*, under θεοποιέω) habitually used such as alone adequate to shadow forth "the good things which pass man's understanding, which God has prepared for them that love Him." Irenæus, an older contemporary of Clement, through Polycarp the spiritual grandson of St. John, thus expresses the Divine order for man: "Non ab initio Dii facti sumus, sed primo quidem homines, tunc demum Dii" (iv. 38, 4). Athanasius, the greatest

[1] οἴδαμεν ὅτι ἐὰν φανερωθῇ, ὅμοιοι αὐτῷ ἐσόμεθα· ὅτι ὀψόμεθα αὐτὸν καθώς ἐστι. The passage does not appear to be quoted in Clement, though he quotes *v.* 3 (*Strom.* iii. 530, where note ἐπὶ τῷ κυρίῳ).

in the whole line of Alexandrian teachers, sums up the purpose of the Incarnation in this startling epigram —"He became man that we might become divine" (*αὐτὸς ἐνήνθρωπησεν ἵνα ἡμεῖς θεοποιηθῶμεν, de Incar. Verbi*, § 54).

So Clement, translating into bolder terms the simple language of St. John, brings us to the point where we can only feel the poverty of human thought and desire to rest in trustful silence. The pupil of the Word, created in the image of God, having seen and known God in Christ in this earthly order, seeing and knowing hereafter "face to face," attains to that for which he was made, even the divine likeness.

Thus even in this most inadequate review of Clement's life and work we can see how, with all the exaggerations and the blanks of his theology, he nobly aimed at fulfilling his peculiar office in the education of the Church. He was raised up to be a witness that Christ meets the needs of human thought, and that He alone can do so. To use the words which Browning puts into the mouth of St. John dying in the desert:—

> "I say, the acknowledgment of God in Christ,
> Accepted by thy reason, solves for thee
> All questions in the earth and out of it,
> And hath so far advanced thee to be wise."

Clement points to the Word as the teacher of all men—the heathen, the philosopher, the Jew, the simple Christian, the Christian scholar. In Christ, so far as may be here, a final unity is reached—a unity of

history, of knowledge, of life. The true scholar of the Word is, as Clement says, μοναδικός (*Strom.* iv. 635), one who is at unity with himself, because his conceptions and his hopes are centred in the Word alone.

It is not without significance that we have in a passage of the *Imitatio Christi* (§ 3) a condensation of the characteristic lessons which Clement teaches. With it this lecture may appropriately close.

"Felix quem ueritas per se docet. . . .
Cui æternum uerbum loquitur:
A multis opinionibus expeditur.
Ex uno uerbo omnia:
Et unum loquuntur omnia:
Et hoc est principium,
Quod et loquitur nobis. . . .
Cui omnia unum sunt,
Et omnia ad unum trahit,
Et omnia in uno uidet:
Potest stabilis corde esse:
Et in deo pacificus permanere."

Origen.

BY THE

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ORIGEN.

BEFORE the faith of Jesus Christ could conquer the world, it was necessary that it should first gain supremacy over the minds of men. The intellectual victory preceded the social and political triumphs of the faith.[1] It is with this intellectual struggle that we are concerned to-night. The battle was mainly fought out at Alexandria, and Origen, the greatest of the Alexandrian scholars, is by far the most prominent figure in the fight.

Alexandria had been for centuries the home of the later Jewish culture and of the later Greek philosophy, and those who held that Jesus Christ was Lord, not only of all men, but of the whole of man—of his intellect and reason as well as of his heart and soul—found plenty of scope and opportunity in Alexandria for insisting on and proving their claims. The necessity and the opportunity of a higher Christian education was soon felt and seized. The Church at Alexandria found herself in a centre of intellectual

[1] Westcott, "Religious Thought in the West," pp. 294 ff. I have drawn so freely from this article, and the article on Origen in the "Dictionary of Christian Biography," that I have found it impossible to specify in detail the extent to which they have been used.

pursuits and interests, and it was impossible that she should remain unaffected by them. A vigorous and growing community could not hold herself entirely aloof from the life which surrounded her. The influence of the philosophical schools was soon felt in the Church. Some of her members, like Ammonius, fell back into the Greek philosophy which they had left. Others, like Ambrosius, the friend and patron of Origen, were caught by the allurements of Gnosticism. Others again, like Heraclas, Origen's pupil and successor, while remaining true to the faith which they had accepted, lost none of their interest in philosophy, and continued to wear the philosopher's cloak while devoting themselves to the work of Christian teachers and ministers. Thus the needs of Christian education were brought into prominence by the circumstances of the time and place, and the new want was met with characteristic readiness by the leaders of the new faith. The catechetical instruction of those who desired baptism, which in other places was imparted unsystematically, as occasion arose, by bishop or priest, was systematised at Alexandria in a regular school. Hence arose the famous Catechetical School of Alexandria. Tradition named St. Mark as the founder of the school. The earliest teacher of whom we know anything with certainty is Pantænus, whose pupil and successor, St. Clement, was Origen's master and teacher. All that concerns us, however, is the fact that for more than two generations the work had been vigorously carried on before Origen was called, in

his eighteenth year, to the headship of the school. Of the methods of instruction which were in vogue before the time of Origen we know very little; but we are fortunate enough to possess a vivid picture of the system of Christian education which was carried on at Alexandria, under the leadership of Origen, at the end of the second century A.D. We can hardly say that the intervening centuries have improved much upon the plan. Certainly our own system of training for the ministry, on its intellectual side, falls very far short of it. The picture is drawn from the experience of a pupil, not at Alexandria indeed, but at Cæsarea, the scene of Origen's labours during the later part of his life. But there is no reason to suppose that he modified, in any essential particular, at Cæsarea, the general methods which were adopted at Alexandria; and we may well suppose that the main outlines of education were those which he inherited from his master Clement.

The most striking merits of the system are its breadth and thoroughness, and above all its moral earnestness. No branch of human study, no method of mental discipline, could be neglected by the Christian student. But throughout the course, the aim of the whole was kept steadily in view; and that aim was the training and improving of every human faculty for the service of God. *Christianus sum, nihil humani a me alienum puto* (As a Christian I am bound to interest myself in everything human), if we may adopt the well-known words of Terence, was the

practical motto of the Alexandrian scholars. Their object was not the dilettante curiosity of a Chremes, but the earnest desire to grow by moral effort into the likeness of God.

The first stage in the course of education was a thorough training in grammar and logic. To be able to appreciate the exact meaning of words and of sentences, and to detect the difference between false arguments and true, was the necessary preliminary to all sound learning and religious education. The weeds of ignorance, rashness, and prejudice must be rooted out of the mind. But the character of the teacher was manifested from the outset. In his hands Logic did not become a medium for rhetorical display, or for gaining an unfair advantage over an opponent in discussion, but the means of most rigorously testing the truth.

Taught to think clearly, the pupils were next introduced to the study of the physical world. And here geometry and astronomy were the sciences on which the teacher mainly relied. He made the former, we are told, the "sure and immovable foundation" of his teaching; and by means of the latter, he led the thoughts of his pupils, as it were by a ladder, from earth to heaven. And so the unreasoning astonishment and cringing terror with which they had formerly regarded the marvels of the Universe gave place to intelligent admiration of the sacred economy of creation. The study of the physical world was regarded as a necessary part of the preliminary

training of the theological student. Natural science is the right introduction to theology.

The study of physical science was naturally followed by that of ethics. The four Platonic virtues of practical wisdom, righteousness, courage, and self-control, formed the basis of the ethical system which was inculcated. All the known ethical systems were studied, and an attempt was made to adopt into the teaching of the school all that was of permanent value in each. But the object kept in view was not so much to formulate a theory, a new code of morals, or an eclectic system of ethics, as to build up character. The pupils were taught that the true root and source of moral evil is in the irrational part of our nature, if it is allowed to usurp sway over the rational, and that health and morality are only to be found where Reason bears undisputed supremacy in a man. Virtue must be practised and cultivated rather than talked about. The true end of ethics is life and conduct. Our account of this part of the system ends characteristically: "Much as we learnt from Origen's words, we learnt far more from his example."

Thus philosophy was treated not as a means of livelihood, nor as a method of display, but as a theory of life. We cannot but notice in passing that such a statement as this casts a strange light on the degeneration of later Greek philosophy. It sorely needed the fresh impulse of a new faith.

The end of all the virtues was piety, "rightly called the mother of all virtues;" and the end of all study

and of all life was put forward as no less than this: "With a pure mind to draw near to God, by becoming like Him, and to abide in Him." The words remind us of one of Plato's highest sayings, that the true end of life is the becoming like God so far as is possible. Between the two lies the revelation of the Incarnation, which had changed an unrealisable ideal into a possible object of endeavour.

With this end in view no source of knowledge was to be neglected. With hardly any exception the works of all philosophers were to be read and studied, that everything that was of value might be culled from each system. Origen's view seems to have been that it needs far more knowledge to neglect with safety to read a book than to read it; for until all has been tried and tested there is no sufficient experience to guide our choice. As a rule of conduct, it may be impracticable perhaps, but it is a point of view which we are always in danger of neglecting. The Greek word which described the man who confined himself to his private affairs, and neglected the interests of the state, has given us our modern English word "idiot." There is a danger in all one-sided development.

But we must return to our subject. The whole scheme of education was intended to lead up to the study of the Holy Scriptures, which contained, according to the view of the Alexandrians, God's final revelation of Himself to the world through the Word, who became incarnate. Of this revelation all the Gentile philosophies were but side-lights.

Of the method of interpretation which found favour at Alexandria, it will be more convenient to speak in connection with Origen's writings. Here it is sufficient to notice that the whole educational system culminated in the study of Scripture, which was regarded as containing the word of God, as the vehicle of His revelation of Himself to His creatures.

This outline of the scheme of education adopted in the Catechetical School of Alexandria is taken from the farewell address delivered by one of Origen's most famous pupils, just before he left the school, where he had studied for five years. Our knowledge thus rests on contemporary evidence. Gregory the Wonder-worker had come under Origen's influence at the first by accident. He was on his way to Berytus, to study Roman law at what was then the most famous legal school in the Empire, but he had been obliged to make a detour to Cæsarea to conduct his sister to that place. So it came about that he met Origen, whose influence over him, and power of attraction, was so great that he gave up his original purpose of studying Roman law, and stayed at Cæsarea to study philosophy under Origen's guidance.

I have dwelt at some length on this account of second-century education, because it seems to emphasise the great loss which we have suffered in the dominating influence over later theology exercised by the African school of Tertullian, Cyprian, and, in a far higher degree, Augustine, to the exclusion of Alexandrian influence. It is to Alexandria and not to Africa that we

must look for hints from Church History as to how we ought to meet the difficulties and make use of the encouragements of our own days.

But I must not forget that Origen, and not the Alexandrian Catechetical School, is the subject which claims our immediate attention. Before we deal with his writings and opinions, I must ask your attention to a short sketch of his life. Origen's active life covers the first half of the third century of our era. Born about 185, he succeeded, at the age of only seventeen, to the headship of the Catechetical School of Alexandria, in 202, at a time when its teachers were dispersed, owing to the persecution of Severus. He was the son of Christian parents, and thus affords the first example of a Christian scholar trained from his earliest years in the faith of which he was to be so prominent a champion. He did not, like his predecessor Clement, seek in vain for mental satisfaction in all the known systems of philosophy, before he found in the Christian faith, as he heard it taught and saw it lived by Pantænus, that which satisfied his needs and aspirations. Nor did he, like Augustine in the next century, pass through the experience of a youth partly at any rate given up to vice, and an early manhood under the influence of Manichean dualism, an experience which left its scars on all his life and thought before he submitted to the yoke of Christ. The life of Origen, to use his own expression, was one unbroken prayer.

He was an Egyptian by birth, as his name, Origenes, son of the Egyptian god Horus, suggests,

and was probably born at Alexandria. His father Leonidas was probably a rhetorician, and a man of some property. But it is significant, that though himself a martyr, he was always known in later times as Leonidas, the father of Origen. Under his parent's direction, Origen became in very early years an eager student of the Scriptures, and often, we are told, by his questions about the deeper meaning of Scripture, sorely perplexed his father, who, while openly rebuking his curiosity, thanked God in private for the gift of such a son. His character, and the influence he exercised over his own family, are clearly seen in what happened during the persecution of Severus, when he was not yet eighteen years old. His father was taken off to prison, and it was only by the device of his mother, who hid his clothes, that Origen was prevented from giving himself up to the authorities, in order to share his fate. He wrote a letter to his father in prison, bidding him let no concern for his family daunt his resolution. His father gained the crown of martyrdom, and his property was confiscated, so that Origen had for the future to earn his own livelihood, and support his mother and brothers. He was the eldest of seven children. He was partly helped by a wealthy Christian lady of Alexandria, and in part supported himself by giving lessons at first in literature; but as the teachers of the Catechetical School had been dispersed in consequence of the persecution, he was persuaded to give instruction in the Christian faith.

He thus succeeded informally at first to the headship of the school; but his work was marked by such success, that the Bishop Demetrius soon appointed him formally to that post. To this time may in all probability be attributed a story told of him by Epiphanius, which is sufficiently illustrative of his courage and promptness to deserve quotation. The crowd on one occasion seized him and dragged him to the steps of the temple of their idol Serapis, and bade him distribute to all who came to worship the palms which were used in the service of the idol. He took the palms, and distributed them as he was bidden, saying, however, to each man to whom he gave the palm, "Take the palm—not the palm of the idol, but the palm of Christ." It is typical of his whole life, which was spent in claiming everything—material, intellectual, spiritual—for the service of Christ.

The persecution did not last long, and after it was over, for twelve or thirteen years, Origen devoted himself to his work of teaching and study. Living a life of the most rigorous asceticism, he tried to fulfil literally all the Gospel precepts, possessing but a single cloak, going barefoot, and sleeping on the bare ground. He even went further than this in his attempt to obey to the letter every command of his Master. During this period the greater part of his work on the text of the Old Testament, known as the "Hexapla," was probably done; but most of his time was taken up with teaching, and making himself

thoroughly acquainted with all the opinions of heretics and heathens, which he made it his business to correct. The school increased so largely that he was obliged to hand over the elementary teaching to one of his most promising pupils, Heraclas, who afterwards succeeded him as head of the school, and also became Bishop of Alexandria. He devoted himself to the instruction of his more advanced pupils. In 215 he was obliged to withdraw, in consequence of a violent outburst of persecution, and sought refuge in Palestine at Cæsarea. There, at the request of his friends, he expounded the Scriptures in the public services of the Church. This action of his was the beginning of a serious quarrel with his bishop, Demetrius, who "ventured to describe it as unprecedented." On his return to Alexandria, he devoted himself again to the work of higher education, and began a new form of work in the written Commentaries upon the Scriptures, of which we must say more later. About this time he also wrote his book on "First Principles," which is the chief source of our knowledge of his opinions on all subjects connected with philosophy and theology. It is one of the most important books ever written for the development of Christian theology, but it must have startled many Christian readers. His growing popularity seems to have aroused the jealousy of his bishop, Demetrius; at any rate it became clear that sooner or later, for the sake of peace, he would have to seek another sphere for his labours. Into the quarrel,

which resulted from his ordination by bishops of Palestine as priest, on the occasion of another visit to Cæsarea, I cannot and do not wish to enter. His own bishop was naturally angered at what was practically an act of defiance, and certainly a breach of the discipline of the times. But the quarrel has no special interest for us, and we must hurry on. It is sufficient to notice that in 231 he left Alexandria, never to return. Henceforth Cæsarea in Palestine was the scene of his labours. Here, with some interruptions because of persecution, or the necessity of visiting other countries for one purpose or another, the next twenty years of his life were spent in quiet study and teaching. One fact may prove of interest in connection with this period. Till he was sixty years old, he had never allowed his extempore discourses to be taken down. In 246, at the request of his friends, he changed his custom, and shorthand writers were allowed to take down his sermons and discourses, which were afterwards copied out and published. It is to this that we owe the preservation of most of the homilies or sermons which have come down to us. His work was rudely interrupted by the outbreak of the Decian persecution in 250. He was thrown into prison, probably at Tyre, where he was subjected to a variety of tortures. His constancy was unshaken by them, and next year the death of Decius set him at liberty. But he never recovered from the effects of what he suffered in prison, and he died at Tyre within two years (253). He was buried in the city where he

died; and when in later years a cathedral was built in that city and dedicated to the Holy Sepulchre, his body was placed in the position of honour behind the high altar. The fame of the great theologian lingered on, and it is said that even now fishermen who live on the ruins of the town will point to the mound under which "Oriunus" lies buried.

We must now pass on to consider very briefly some of his writings, and especially his Commentaries on Scripture, which perhaps of all his works exerted the most lasting influence on Christian thought. Jerome tells us that Origen wrote more than most men can read in a lifetime. Six thousand volumes are said to have come from his pen; and if, as is most probable, this is merely a clerical error for six hundred, the figure gives us some idea of the marvellous patience and industry of the man. I can only notice four classes of his writings, which will give some general notion of the extent of his activity, the peculiarities and value of his thought, and its influence on the life of the Church. They are: (1.) his work on the text of the Old Testament, known as the "Hexapla;" (2.) his book on "First Principles;" (3.) his apologetic work, known as the *Contra Celsuum*; (4.) his Commentaries.

(1.) The Old Testament of the early Christians was of course not the Hebrew Scriptures (hardly any of the Fathers had a thorough knowledge of Hebrew), but their Greek translation, known as the Septuagint. The inaccuracies of this translation, which may be

roughly dated as belonging to the second century B.C., and its differences from the Hebrew, had led to three other attempts to represent the original Hebrew more accurately in Greek. These translations, made during the first two centuries of the Christian era, by Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion, were far closer to the Hebrew; and Origen conceived the noble idea of combining in one volume the Hebrew with the four Greek translations, so that an ordinary reader might be in a position to use all the help which was available for the study of the Old Testament. This work is known as the "Hexapla," from the six columns in which it was written, of which the first contained the Hebrew in Hebrew characters, the second the same Hebrew transcribed in Greek letters, for the sake of those who could not read Hebrew, and the other four columns the LXX. and the three later Greek versions. It was a noble undertaking, occupying probably thirteen or fourteen years to accomplish. It was copied and preserved in the library at Cæsarea, and many copies were taken of it or of parts of it, especially of the column containing the LXX. translation, in later years. But Origen's main purpose seems to have been not to determine what was the true text of the Old Testament Scriptures, but to put his readers in possession of all the information about it which could be collected together.

(2.) The second subject is more difficult to deal with at all shortly. The book on "First Principles" contains Origen's views on the origin of the world,

and the destiny of man, and the nature of God; and his views on these subjects are not easily explained. But the book is so remarkable, not only as an exposition of Origen's own views, but as the first attempt at a systematic explanation of Christian doctrine, that no account of Origen would be at all complete or satisfactory which did not include some attempt to trace the main outline of its teaching. In what I have to say about this book, I can only follow very closely what has been written by the Bishop of Durham. The fundamental doctrines of the Creed are assumed on the authority of the Church. The book is an attempt to formulate them into a complete system by the help of what is stated in Holy Scripture, and what may be deduced by the methods of exact reasoning. God and Creation, Creation and Providence, Man and Redemption, and the Holy Scriptures form the subjects of the four books into which the work is divided. (*a*) Starting from the nature of God as incorporeal, invisible, incomprehensible, Origen accepts fully a doctrine of the Trinity. Looking to himself, he feels conscious, as all men do or may, of his own personal existence, of his reason, and of the fact that he can and does make progress towards holiness. Existence, reason, hallowing are facts of which he is certain, and he feels that these relations in himself correspond to something in the Divine Nature. And, after all, is not the nearest approach that we can make to any understanding of the doctrine of the Trinity to believe,

and act on our belief, in God the Father who made us, God the Son who redeemed us, and God the Holy Ghost who sanctifieth us? But Origen proceeds at once to explain his view of the end of human life. It is to become gradually more and more like God, in this world and in the worlds to come, by voluntarily accepting His gifts and His help. Man can do nothing by himself; he has the power of accepting or rejecting the help offered. Human life is or ought to be one long progress of assimilation to God.

But this possibility of progress involves the possibility of decline. If man can go forward, he can also fall back. Origen accepts this, and sees in it the cause of the present condition of men and angels. All rational beings were created with the power of choice. Some by obeying God have risen to the highest offices of heaven; others by self-will have sunk to the condition of demons; and others are in an intermediate state, and are imprisoned in human bodies, to work out their redemption through the discipline of this life. But no rational being can sink so far as to become a brute.

(β) The idea of this world as a place of discipline and preparation is developed in the Second Book. According to Origen's view, the inequalities of men's present circumstances, material and spiritual, are the result of their conduct in previous states of existence. But the present life is not merely a kind of prison life—it affords the best discipline for moral growth, the best training for a higher life hereafter. This

view of life enables Origen to meet what has always been the greatest difficulty of thinking and feeling men. The existence of evil and of unmerited suffering seems to point to some limitation of the power of God external to himself. In reality they may only point to the limitations of our knowledge. The present world, our present life, are but small fragments of a vast place, of which we can trace the smallest part; while the fact that God so loved the world that He sent His only begotten Son to save it, is sufficient ground for confidence and hope. It is enough to know that—

> "Our times are in His hand
> Who saith, 'A whole I planned;'"

and that

> "All creation is one act at once.
> . . . But we that are not all,
> As parts, can see but part—now this, now that."

Of course the further difficulty presents itself at once that the discipline of this life does not always seem to tend towards improvement. There is hardening as well as chastening. Origen fully recognises this, and gathers from it the necessity of supposing further systems of punishment and purification beyond this life. In our Father's house are many mansions. Every stage beyond this life is but another step in the long discipline of our Father in heaven, to which in the end even the most hardened soul will at last submit. But he is recalled from this speculation by

the recollection that Scripture concentrates our attention on the next scenes, of Resurrection, Judgment, Punishment. Here he follows literally the Pauline analogy of the seed and the corn, and sees in Resurrection, not the restoration of a natural body, but the complete preservation of all that goes to make us what we are, to preserve our personal identity. Judgment is for him no local act, but the unimpeded working out of God's laws. Punishment is not vengeance, but that severity of discipline which is necessary for purification.

(γ) Origen turns his attention in the next place more directly to the moral nature of man and of rational beings. Their distinguishing characteristic is the power of free-will, *i.e.*, the power of accepting or rejecting God's help, which alone can enable us to become what we were meant to be. We can do nothing by ourselves, but we can refuse to accept God's help. We are responsible for sin, which has its origin in us, and not in the circumstances in which we are placed. Failure is our own fault, but restoration is possible. God said, "Let us make man in our image after our likeness," and later on we read that "God made man, in the image of God made He him." This, Origen holds, must mean that we were created in the Divine image, and destined to attain afterwards to the Divine likeness. If we fail to attain finally to this, the fault rests with us, for refusing God's proffered help, without which we can do nothing. Origen saw clearly that true freedom

consists in absolute surrender to the will of God. He believed in a God whose *service* is perfect freedom.

(δ) Lastly, he believed that his whole system is really taught in every particular by Holy Scripture, if we interpret it aright. However wild some of his speculations may seem, he accepted the recognised creed on the authority of the Church; he deduced, as he thought, all his system from the teaching of Holy Scripture. He accepted the same authorities which we acknowledge. Enough has been said to show the extraordinary boldness and width of his thoughts. It there is much that we cannot accept, there is much to set us thinking, and thinking on the right lines.

(3.) It is impossible to speak at length of Origen's apologetic work, the eight books against Celsus. He had to meet an opponent who began indeed by putting forward the common and trite objections to Christianity, as being the faith of an illegal, barbarous, ignorant, immoral, and anti-social sect, the common dirt which has been thrown by the populace of every age at any unpopular sect. But he continued his attack with far more serious and far-reaching objections, which were not so easily met. Among others he laid stress on the incredibility of the Old Testament record of God's dealings with men, the fixity of nature, the presumption of man in claiming for himself the superiority which is implied in the doctrines of the Incarnation and the Redemption. And here we may notice that if Origen's answers are not wholly satis-

factory, no wholly satisfactory answer was possible at that time, or perhaps even now. But we cannot but feel that the general lines suggested in his book on "First Principles" are those on which a true answer to such questions must be sought.

(4) I have kept till last the subject of Origen's work as an interpreter of Holy Scripture, because it is here that the value of his work perhaps chiefly lies. His Commentaries were voluminous. One instance will suffice. He wrote thirty-two books of Commentaries on rather more than half of the Gospel according to St. John. He commented on every book of Scripture, in works of proportionate length, either in the form of short notes, or of expository sermons, or of written commentaries. But what I wish to bring before you now is rather his view of the inspiration of Scripture, and of the way in which it should be interpreted.

Accepting in the fullest sense the authority of Scripture, which he regards as containing a Divine revelation, he investigates with characteristic boldness the character of inspiration. He bases the claims of Scripture not on any particular theory about the books contained in the Bible as a whole, but on the fact that they contain the record of God's dealings with man through the Old Testament Lawgiver and Prophets, and through Christ. The Scriptures are Divine, because they tell us of Moses and of Christ. Many men have tried to formulate creeds and establish philosophies. They have seldom succeeded in persuading even a considerable majority

of their own countrymen; much less have they succeeded with those of other nations. But the world is full of men and women who have left their country's gods and their national religion, to put themselves under the law of Moses, or to become disciples of Jesus Christ. Christianity offered men a life which could be lived, and its wide acceptance and rapid extension, in the face of persecution and of death, proves that its founder was more than man. He foresaw the persecution, and foretold the spread of His religion. Such predictions we should naturally expect to fail. Their fulfilment in His case is a warrant of His Divine power. And the Scriptures foretold Christ, and tell of Him. Besides this, they speak for themselves. "He who reads carefully, attentively, the Holy Scriptures, will experience in himself a trace of inspiration (inspiration is not yet a thing wholly of the past), and will know them to be Divine." They appeal to that in man which is akin to the Divine, and which Christ revealed.

This being so, we need not stumble at the first difficulty which meets us. Just as in nature, it is easy to see God's purpose and God's love in some parts of His creation, but almost beyond our power to do so in other cases, so it is with Scripture. Much of it bears its character clearly marked upon its surface. In other parts, its inspiration is not so clearly seen. The fault lies, however, not in the Scriptures themselves, but in our interpretation of

them. The literal meaning is not the only meaning, nor even the most important meaning. It has a mystical, allegorical meaning as well. All Scripture, Origen thought, has three or at any rate two meanings — the obvious literal meaning, the moral meaning, and the deeper spiritual meaning. As man is tri-partite, consisting of body, soul, and spirit, so Scripture has three senses, the literal, the moral, and the spiritual. Thus Scripture must be allegorically interpreted, before we can get at its most important meaning, even as St. Paul taught us that the story of Hagar and Sarah should be allegorically interpreted ("which things are an allegory," Gal. iv. 24). So Origen saw in every statement of Scripture a deeper meaning besides the literal interpretation, which might or might not be true in itself. One illustration must suffice: the water-pots at Cana of Galilee, which were set for the purification of the Jews, contained, we are told by St. John, two or three firkins apiece. So the true Jew, who is one inwardly (Rom. ii. 29), is purified by the study of Scripture, which has always two meanings, the moral and spiritual, and sometimes also a third, the literal. Many passages of Scripture were never meant to be literally understood. Who could suppose, Origen asks, that there was a real day and night before the creation of the sun? Who could think that God worked like a husbandman and planted a literal Garden of Eden? The difficulties of Scripture when literally interpreted were intended to urge the sincere student to further

study, and to discover the hidden meaning beneath the untenable letter.

Now much of this theory is fantastic and absurd, and the applications of the allegorical method are often truly distressing. But it is an honest attempt to face the difficulties of Scripture, and perhaps it was the only solution of those difficulties, when really and honestly faced, that was possible before our own generation. We have learnt to recognise the gradual progress from lower to higher in God's revelation of Himself to man; but it is only in our our own generation that this has been fully realised. Origen's theory was based on a true feeling that every word of God is of eternal significance. More than this, it is, I believe, at bottom not unlike the solution of the same or similar difficulties to which we are now tending. The Bible is its own best apologist and defender. It contains God's message to man. We must let that message speak for itself, and not hamper it by any preconceived opinion as to how we think the Scriptures ought to have been written. We have no right to raise the barrier of any particular theory of inspiration of which we happen to approve between God's message and God's creatures. The Bible must speak for itself. It contains the word of God, and God's message is far greater than the external form in which it has been handed down.

I have tried to put before you a few of the leading features in the life and teaching of a bold thinker and a great theologian. As it was only possible to touch

on a very large subject, I have tried to select those points of view which suggest most forcibly that many of our own difficulties and encouragements were as keenly felt at Alexandria in the early years of the third century A.D. as we feel them now. I believe that we have a great deal to learn from the Alexandrian thinkers still. To realise that our faith must cover all the facts of life; to recognise that Christ claimed the whole of every man, mind and intellect no less than heart and spirit; to find in the incarnation of the Son of God the key, not only to the whole of human history, but to the whole of creation; to recognise thankfully that every branch of science contains a revelation of God, however difficult it may be to interpret it rightly. These are the problems to which the Christian thought of the future must be applied if it is again to mould the thoughts of men. And the victory over the world of thought, which was won at Alexandria in earlier times, will be repeated, if the struggle is carried on with the same thoroughness and boldness, in the same spirit of self-devotion, and in the same conviction that all things are ours, since we are Christ's, and Christ is God's.

Eusebius of Cæsarea.

BY THE

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EUSEBIUS OF CÆSAREA.

THERE is more fitness than appears at first sight in the old comparison of history to the course of a river. Sometimes the stream flows calmly, with endless windings and almost stagnant backwaters; and sometimes it swirls along in stormy breakers through some narrow gorge. So it is with history. The stagnant fifteenth century is followed by the stirring sixteenth, and the sleepy eighteenth ends in the mighty clearance of the Napoleonic wars. Twice, and I think only twice, has a revolution of the highest order been commanded by the lifetime of a great historian. Polybius beheld the ancient world of nations dissolving into the Roman Empire; and after seven hundred years Procopius beheld the Empire, in its turn, dissolving into a new world of nations.

This is the sort of place held in Church history by Eusebius of Cæsarea, as an eye-witness of one of its mightiest revolutions. His youth was shadowed by memories of bloodshed and persecution from the days of Decius and Valerian. In middle life he saw the Empire and the Church fight out the last and

deadliest of their battles through ten long years of shame and horror. In his old age the last clouds of persecution had utterly vanished, and the churches were basking in the full sunshine of Constantine's favour. The former things had passed away, and all was new. Here was the historian's opportunity, and Eusebius used it well. We will first trace his life, and then we can try to mark his place in history. It was in itself the quiet life of a student, yet it was passed in the midst of a mighty drama.

Eusebius then was born, as it would seem, in Palestine, soon after the year 260. Those were years of dire distress, when the everlasting Empire seemed settling down in world-wide ruin. But God gave Rome and the world a deliverer in the Emperor Aurelian, the conqueror of Zenobia and Tetricus, the Queen of the East and the Cæsar of the West. Then came quieter times. Eusebius grew up in Cæsarea, the city of Cornelius, and the refuge of Origen. Here he laid the foundation of his massive learning in the teaching of the presbyter Dorotheus, and here he formed the great attachment of his life, to the saintly scholar and future martyr, Pamphilus. Through Cæsarea too passed the Emperor Diocletian in 296, on his march against the rebels of Alexandria; and in his train Eusebius marked a tall and handsome officer who was one day to become as great an emperor as Diocletian himself. But it was ten years yet before young Constantine started on the career of victory which brought him from the shores of

Britain to the banks of the Tiber and the walls of Byzantium.

Meanwhile great things had come to pass. In 303 the tempest of the last and greatest of the persecutions burst on the bewildered churches. Eusebius at Cæsarea was in the forefront of the battle, where the Cæsar Maximin was fighting for the gods; and round the house of Pamphilus it raged its very hottest. Pamphilus himself was slain for Christ, and a noble army round him of men and women that were faithful unto death. If Eusebius escaped from prison without denying Christ, it was only because heathen Rome never did her work of blood with the infernal thoroughness of Catholic Rome. But it is a shame even to speak of what was done. Remember only the deep and lasting horror which it left behind. The fires of Smithfield were as nothing compared with Maximin's grim devilries.

Now look again in the year 313. The struggle is over and the victory won. The gaps in the ranks are terrible, but the remnant stands triumphant on the blood-stained hill of battle. The Lord has avenged His slaughtered saints, and brought out His churches by Constantine's hand. On every side swells out a varied song of victory, down to the old rhetorician's fierce delight in the sufferings of the dying persecutors, and up to the pure and sunny joy of the young deacon Athanasius. We miss the meaning of the time if we forget the glowing hope and tremulous excitement of those first wonderful years of world-wide victory, when

it was possible for Christian men to dream that the kingdoms of the world were already become the kingdoms of our God.

We can pass them over lightly. Eusebius became Bishop of Cæsarea soon after 313, and there he remained for the rest of his life. There is little more to tell of him but quiet literary labour till we near the meeting of the Council of Nicæa in 325. That Council was called by Constantine to seal his alliance with the churches, and make a final end of all the troubles which disturbed them. There were two main questions in dispute, and on both of them Eusebius could speak with weight. The Easter controversy is long ago forgotten, but Arianism is still a living question. Arian doctrine indeed is dead, for the Arian Christ is neither a deified man nor a man like other men, but a half-divine being, created to represent the absent majesty of a God whose nature is hidden in impenetrable mystery. Creature as he is, he is still our Creator, and even our Redeemer. Creature as he is, he still claims our worship as if he were truly divine. Modern Unitarianism is elastic enough, but I think no form of it is quite like this. Yet the spirit of Arianism is all around us. We see it in a vast variety of schemes which make our Saviour half divine, and only half divine, with all the honour they heap on Him—neither the Son of God He said He was, nor yet a son of man tempted in all things like as we are. We see it again in many a man who points a battery of reason on things divine, and never

dreams that the questions of the Spirit are spiritual. We see it yet again in the widespread unbelief which makes God either simply almighty or simply unknown—for it matters little to moral beings whether there is an arbitrary will or nothing at all beyond the laws of Nature. The Mahometan idea of God, which underlies alike the Arian, the Roman, and the Genevan doctrine, is near akin to the Agnostic. In either case the last word that we can reach is, *God is Mystery*, not *Love*.

But to return to Eusebius. Arianism had raised the simple issue, whether the Son of God is God or a creature; and when the question was plainly put before the Council, there was no hesitation in the answer. Eusebius signed the Creed with the rest, and never went back from it. Yet he signed unwillingly. He was no Arian, yet neither was he willing to shut out Arianism from the churches. He was not at all a lover of heresy in general, and indeed shows more sympathy with heathenism than with the wanderings of Christian thought; but there did not seem to be much danger in an error which the Council had all but unanimously condemned; and meanwhile it was an error on the right side, and might be a useful protest against more dangerous error. If the distinction which Arianism drew between the Divine father and the created Son was much too broad, it was at any rate based on an admitted difference, which Eusebius himself was expressing in the illogical theory of a secondary God. Arianism also did good service in

emphasising the Saviour's premundane and real Person against the Sabellians, who explained away the Trinity as three successive temporal dispensations of the one God. So he thought it bad policy to shut out the Arians; and if a Creed was to be imposed on the bishops, the controversy was best left to rest behind the ambiguities of the ancient Creed of Cæsarea, which Eusebius laid before the Council.

There was great force in this reasoning—Arianism could not be shut out without using words not found in Scripture; and when even willing bishops hesitated at this, it was clear that opinion was not ready for so serious a step. Moreover, the danger of Sabellianism was far more real than Athanasius was willing to admit. The very word he wanted to put into the creed was Sabellian. Nevertheless, on the main point, Athanasius was beyond all question right. Our Lord claimed to be in the very highest sense the Son of God; and by that claim the Gospel stands or falls. The Council had not sought the question: but now that they were asked by Constantine to put into the Creed everything that Christian bishops needed to confess, they were forced to decide it; they simply could not leave it open for Christian bishops to call their Lord a creature. If a creature could not create us, still less could any creature redeem us; so that if Christ is not God, we are yet in our sins. This was the argument which overcame all hesitation. The Cæsarean Creed was shaped into the Nicene, and signed by all the bishops but two, whom the Emperor sent into exile.

On this question, then, Eusebius saw his policy rejected; but on other matters the Council and the Emperor deferred to him. He was the most learned scholar of the East; and in any case the Bishop of Cæsarea would have held a high position, even in that august assembly. The Emperor's favour was unshaken, and a few years later he was offered the great see of Antioch; but Eusebius preferred to remain at Cæsarea. It was now 330, the year when Byzantium became the last and greatest colony of Rome—Constantinople. Somewhere about this time Constantine directed him to have fifty sumptuous copies of the Scriptures made for the churches of the new capital. Of the two chief manuscripts on which the Greek text of the New Testament depends, Codex ℵ (*Sinaiticus*) is very possibly one of these fifty; and though *B* (*Vaticanus*) is not one, it agrees with ℵ in showing traces of some connection with the library at Cæsarea.

The Arians rapidly recovered from their defeat at Nicæa, and in ten years' time were endeavouring to eject Athanasius from the see of Alexandria. The Council of Tyre, in 335, was scandalous even in the history of Councils. Iniquity followed iniquity, till Athanasius fled to Constantinople, to lay his appeal from such a travesty of justice before the Emperor in person. The bishops promptly condemned him by default. Eusebius was no friend of Athanasius; but there is nothing to connect him personally with the scandals. When Constantine angrily summoned the

bishops to court, Eusebius went with the rest, and delivered a great oration for the festival of the thirtieth year of the Emperor's reign.

The great Emperor died in 337, and Eusebius a couple of years later. Yet even in the last year of his life he was able to write his Life or rather Panegyric of Constantine, besides a long work against Marcellus of Ancyra, one of the enemies of Arianism who had gone beyond Athanasius, and fallen into something very like Sabellianism.

Now that we have traced the life of Eusebius, we shall be able to fix his place in history. For mere weight of learning, Eusebius is unsurpassed in ancient times. His own works cover an enormous range of history, apologetics, criticism, and doctrine; and over the whole of this wide field he never fails to show good sense and fair ability. The number and variety of his quotations from earlier writers is amazing. In his "Ecclesiastical History," for instance, he gives passages from more than fifty different authors, quoting many of them several times over, or from various works. And it must be borne in mind that these are not random quotations, but carefully selected. Sometimes he gives a single sentence or part of a sentence out of a large book. It is true that his learning is almost confined to Greek literature; his Hebrew scholarship is of the very slightest, and even of Latin he seems to have known but little. Some of the translations he gives of imperial edicts may be his own work; but Tertullian he seems to know only

through a Greek translation of the "Apology," which may have been executed by Julius Africanus, the friend of Origen. But after all deductions, his learning is astonishing.

As a theologian, Eusebius ranks lower. To later ages and to the bigots of all ages he gave offence by his sympathetic view of heathenism, by his defence of Origen, by his wavering at Nicæa, and by his opposition to the picture-worship of the Empress Constantia. Yet all these things are greatly to his credit. If he saw fragments of God's truth and traces of God's leading in heathenism, he was but following in the track of Justin and Clement, and doing what St. Paul had done at Athens. If he was fascinated by the splendid speculations of Origen, his allegiance was given to no unworthy teacher, but to one of the purest and truest of Christian thinkers. If he wavered at Nicæa, it was because he took a wider view than Athanasius, and saw more clearly the fearful dangers of the right decision. And if we need further testimony to his Christian truthfulness, we have it in his condemnation by the idol-worshippers of the Seventh General Council. Yet with all this he hardly stands in the front rank of Nicene divines; in fact, he hardly belongs to the Nicene age at all, for his theology is that of the generation before it. As a historian he reaps the gain of the rapid changes amongst which he lived; but as a divine he is to some extent left stranded by them. His mind is more wide than deep, and rather ranges over history than grasps the mysteries

of doctrine. He lacks the thoughtful fervour of Origen, the commanding strength of Athanasius, the daring speculation of Apollinarius of Laodicea. Over heathens like Hierocles, or confused thinkers like Marcellus of Ancyra, he could win an easy victory; but his own system was neither logical nor well compacted. He could see that Arianism was false, but he never went deep enough to see precisely how the mistake arose. He was a man of the third century, involved in the philosophical conception of God as not one only, but essentially simple, so that a real Trinity was impossible. His efforts to escape were so many inconsistencies which only laid him open to Arian attacks. In truth there was neither place nor room for Trinity or Incarnation till the idea of God had been remodelled in a Christian sense from top to bottom. The work of the Nicene age was to show that God is not personal only but tripersonal, and that He is a Trinity of love, not a Being of abstract simplicity. The failure of Eusebius is that he could not see this, and it is the glory of Athanasius that he did see it; and this is why Eusebius is remembered as the man that hesitated in the day of battle, while Athanasius towers like a king of men above the wavering fathers at Nicæa.

But if Eusebius did good work over the entire field of sacred learning, his noblest fame was won on the domain of history. There is of course nothing original in the plan of minor works like the "Martyrs of Palestine" or the "Life of Constantine;" and even in

his great "Chronicon," or tables of universal history, Bruttius and Julius Africanus had gone before him. But the idea of his "Church History" was new. No doubt there were lists of bishops before his time, like that of Hegesippus; and these would often include stories like the murder of James the Lord's brother, or the appearance of the grandsons of Jude before Domitian. But it was none the less a new idea to take in the leaders both of orthodox and of heretical thought, to trace the calamities of the Jews and the persecutions of the churches, and so to transform the meagre lists into a general history of the Church of Christ all over the world. In truth, the very conception of universal history was Christian. It is not that heathenism wanted for great historians—Thucydides and Tacitus stand alone even now; but even Herodotus and Polybius never rose to the idea of a single plan in history, and a Divine purpose running through the obscure quarrels of barbarian peoples. No such thought was possible as long as men were blinded with their godless multitude of gods and pride of race and class; but from the Gospel it follows at once. From the Fatherhood of God, known through the Incarnate Son, and realised through the indwelling Spirit, men began to see the majestic unity of history from first to last, with all its labyrinthine threads of race and language, meeting at the Cross of Christ.

This is the idea of history which runs through Scripture like a silver thread, from the old Gospel of Genesis to the final warning of St. John's Epistle.

Eusebius has caught it well. He begins in the beginning, like a true disciple of St. John, and glances down the long ages of God's dealings with His ancient people, to show that it was no strange or foreign light which shone on the world at Christ our Saviour's coming, before he begins his history of the Church of God in every land.

The conception is a splendid one, and in some ways Eusebius is well qualified to carry it out. Of his general truthfulness there can be no serious question. If he passes over the apostasies and scandals of the last great persecution, he gives us fair notice what he means to do. He tells us once for all of worldly quarrels and intrigues that seemed to call for judgment on the fallen churches, and then passes on to nobler scenes. This is avowedly giving only one side of the history; but it is not falsifying the other. A more serious charge is that of flattering Constantine, for in one sense the charge is true. But when will our pedants learn to allow something for the oppression that maketh a wise man mad? Suppose the Tsar of Russia were to lead an army among the Armenians, to deliver them from their enemies, and to show himself a steady friend and patron to them for the rest of his life; would it be very astonishing if the next Armenian historian were a little blind to the Tsar's weak side? Suppose further he had for years enjoyed the Tsar's private friendship, and were writing just after his death, when all men's hearts were tender to the great man they had lost; would he not feel doubly bound

to avoid every word that might seem disloyal to his memory? Now this is exactly the position of Eusebius. So he praises whatever he fairly can, and passes the rest in silence. He never cared for scandals, and in this case he sees no need to tell the bad side of his imperial friend. After all, his panegyric may give a truer picture than a cold analysis would have done, for Constantine is not a man I care to judge entirely by the dark crimes which stain his life.

Again, Eusebius is no mean critic. If he tells a good many marvellous tales, he is always careful to give his evidence. Thus the miracles of Narcissus are only the tradition of the church of Jerusalem; whereas he found written in Papias the story that Justus surnamed Barsabas drank off a deadly poison without harm, and Papias heard it from the daughters of the Apostle Philip. Another story he tells of what he had seen himself, of the miraculous dew which appeared at Cæsarea, as if the very stones had wept with horror at the unburied carcases of the martyrs. What he says he saw with his own eyes is credible enough, but the meaning the Christians put on it is another matter. In fact, Eusebius is very scrupulous in telling us whether he gets his information from documents or from tradition, and of what sort that tradition is. Nor is he often deceived by the spurious writings which were so common in his time. By far the worst of his mistakes is in accepting the correspondence of our Lord with Abgarus of Edessa. There is a better case for others, like Philo's account

of the Therapeutæ or the rescript of the Emperor Titus Antoninus in favour of the Christians. In fact, every one of these three forgeries has found defenders in modern times, and in Philo's case the majority is still with Eusebius. Upon the whole, he has picked his way through the tangle with excellent judgment. Yet again he seems thoroughly trustworthy when he tells us things from his own reading. His quotations indeed are often mere fragments, so rudely torn out of their context as to obscure their meaning; but so far as we are able to check them, they are quite accurate, so far as they go. It is a very great mistake to set down Eusebius as in any general sense uncritical.

The most annoying part of his work is his unpleasant and stilted language. He is never simple, except where he is angry with Marcellus; and he is often obscure. When, for example, the Empress Helena dug up at Jerusalem "the venerable and most holy memorial of the Lord's resurrection," we should be glad to know what it was. Then again his order is most desultory. He repeats a story without hesitation if he thinks of a new detail or a new connection for it. Thus he quotes a good piece of the letter of Polycrates of Ephesus to Victor of Rome twice over. In one place he is telling us how the Apostles John and Philip retired to end their days in Asia; in the other, he is giving the history of the Easter question, about which Polycrates was writing. But his most serious weakness is a certain haste and careless-

ness in his conclusions, as if he did not quite see the bearing of what he quotes. Thus he puts into one chapter two entirely different accounts of the murder of James the Lord's brother, without seeming conscious of their disagreement.

After all, his weaknesses do not come to much; and the worst of them we can set right for ourselves. His plan was a splendid one, and we cannot be surprised if he failed a little in working it out. He had still one qualification for his work which I have not mentioned yet. Perhap Eusebius is unsurpassed in his judgement of the things that posterity would like to know. If we had all the lost books of his library before us, it is likely that we should make pretty much the same selection of quotations as he has done. This is what gives its unique value to his History. Earlier writers are so fragmentary that without him we should find it no easy work to make out a connected narrative; while later writers know hardly anything of early times but what we can read for ourselves in Eusebius. Even he stood from the Apostles as far in time as we stand from Cromwell and Milton, and did not always understand the ideas of early times; but the past was not entirely forgotten in his generation, whereas later writers were quite in the dark about it.

To conclude, Eusebius is a great scholar, but hardly a great man. In mere mass of learning he is a match for Origen, but not in subtle thoughtfulness. At Nicæa his view was wider than that of Athanasius;

yet nobody will for a moment set him on a level with that strongest of Eastern thinkers. His eloquence will bear no comparison with the splendid luxuriance of Chrysostom, or even with the elegant sermon of Meletius of Antioch. Even as a historian, where he is at his best, we miss the cool impartiality of Ammianus, the practical shrewdness of Gregory of Tours, the simplicity of Bede. But Eusebius has a place of his own in history. He struck out a great thought, and strove worthily, and not without success, to realise it. Others could follow, but Eusebius remains for ever the father of Church History.

The Life and Times of St. Athanasius.

BY THE

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THE LIFE AND TIMES OF ST. ATHANASIUS.

In studying the history of the Church of Christ from its first foundation, we cannot fail to notice a general tendency in each successive period towards the concentration of interest around the name of some one or more great leaders of thought and action, whose dominant personality reduces all the other actors in the scene to a subordinate position. Such men are what our Northern countrymen call "outstanding" men. Their very names recall great crises in history, great ecclesiastical movements, great advances in theological speculation, great ventures of faith, and subsequent triumphs of religion. In the fourth century, by the joint confession of friends and opponents, one name challenges to itself signal pre-eminence, that of Athanasius. It was an age of controversy within the Church itself, involving a life and death struggle between orthodoxy and heresy, on the very central truth of the faith of the Church. The theologian who, throughout the whole of his energetic and chequered life, was the champion of the faith which enabled the Church to win the victory

over the religion and philosophy of heathenism; who drew down upon himself by his heroic defence and elucidation of the faith once for all delivered to the saints, the cruellest persecution, and the ever-renewed hostility of the imperial power; who, strong in the conviction of a righteous cause, never quailed before the face of man, was Athanasius, Archbishop of Alexandria. There were great men among his contemporaries—Basil, Gregory of Nyssa, Gregory of Nazianzus, Cyril of Jerusalem, and others; but above them all towers Athanasius, justly surnamed the Great. Of his life, and writings, and influence on all later Christian theology, we have now to speak.

He was born at Alexandria just at the close of the third century, probably about the year 298 A.D. His parents must have been people of fair position and wealth, for he evidently received a liberal education, as is proved by the quotations from Greek philosophers, like Plato and Aristotle, found in his earliest writings, and from Greek poets and orators, like Homer and Demosthenes, in his later works. Alexandria, his native town, though Egyptian by locality, was entirely Greek in its culture and habits of thought. The main study, however, of the young Athanasius had been Holy Scripture. Though he knew no Hebrew, and therefore could not read the Old Testament in the original tongue, he knew it familiarly from the Greek version of the seventy translators, which we know was the Old Testament of the Apostles and the primitive Church; and he was profoundly versed in the original

Scriptures of the New Testament. This combination of Scriptural knowledge and Greek culture he had doubtless acquired in the famous Catechetical School of Alexandria, which had had a succession of illustrious teachers, and was practically the Christian University of the age. There is a story told of Athanasius as a boy, which rests on rather doubtful authority, but is worth mentioning as a witness to the popular impression of his early gravity and devotion. It is said that the Bishop of Alexandria, Alexander, sitting one day at dinner, looked out of his window and saw some boys on the sea-shore, apparently playing at sacred rites. He sent for them, and on inquiry found that one of them had been enacting the part of bishop, and had baptized some of his playfellows, as if they had been catechumens. The boy-bishop was Athanasius. He and his companions were, at the bishop's desire, given up by their parents to be educated for the sacred ministry. Certain it is that, however the introduction first came about, Athanasius became in very early life deacon, and secretary to Bishop Alexander, who must have discerned in him the promise of great ability and earnestness. Those were not days for an easy and superficial confession of Christianity. The last bishop but one of Alexandria had been called upon to suffer martyrdom, when Athanasius was about fourteen years old; and there were many signs of a further outbreak of heathen persecution. It required a strong conviction of faith for Christians to hold fast by their religion. Deeper

study of Holy Scripture led the young Christian scholar to a more profound apprehension of the great proclamation of the Gospel, the intervention of God for the salvation and restoration of fallen man by the incarnation of the Very Son of God Himself. The inward persuasion of heart as to the upholding power of this fundamental doctrine of the faith, and the intellectual conviction of its Scriptural truth, issued in the production of two treatises by Athanasius, when he was not more than twenty years old, one entitled "against the Gentiles," the other, "on the Incarnation of the Word of God," which are marvellous specimens of learning and acuteness, and of permanent value in the development of theological thought. There will be occasion to revert to these in the course of the lecture.

The time had now arrived when the outbreak of a great and far-reaching theological controversy called Athanasius into a position of marked prominence. Probably within a year after the publication of his first book began the Arian controversy. It raised the vital question of the nature of the Person and office of Christ, which had been stirred in other forms during the second and third centuries. Arius was a native of Libya, who had been ordained deacon by Peter, and presbyter by his successor, Achillas, Bishop of Alexandria, and had been put in charge of one of the parish churches of that city. He is said to have protested against some sermons of his bishop, Alexander, which he alleged were inconsistent with the recognition of

any real distinction between the Person of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost in the Godhead; and in opposition to such teaching he propounded the doctrine that the Son of God was a creature, albeit the highest of created beings, formed out of nothing, before the worlds were; through whom the worlds were made. There was a time when He was not. The plain significance of this was a denial of the eternity and true Divinity of the Son; it was an ascription of the title God to the Son only in a secondary and subordinate sense; it was a refusal to acknowledge in the Son a sharer in the essence of God. Arius met with considerable support for his views, both among the clergy of Alexandria and in his own native country, Libya, where two bishops, Secundus and Theonas, joined his party. Alexander appealed to Arius and his friends to abandon their novel views, but in vain. He therefore summoned a council of the bishops of Egypt and Libya, who assembled to the number of one hundred, and passed sentence of deposition upon Arius and his clerical partisans for their heresy and impiety. The encyclical letter which announced the reasons of their deposition was almost certainly composed for Alexander by his young secretary, Athanasius, and is based upon arguments and references to Holy Scripture urged with much force and fulness of thought. Arius remained unconvinced, and appealed for aid to several foreign bishops, amongst whom two of great influence were forward in giving him their sympathy—Eusebius, Bishop of Nicomedia in Bithynia,

who was intimate with the Emperor Constantine, and his namesake, Eusebius of Cæsarea in Palestine, the famous Church historian. The confusion of the controversy spread. The Emperor tried a mediating policy, wishing to induce both parties to give up all discussion on the question as being comparatively unimportant. Alexander and his Egyptian brethren, and his keen-witted deacon, saw more truly the greatness of the issue at stake—they refused to yield. The result was, that in order to compose the controversy, Constantine, at the suggestion, it would seem, of Hosius, Bishop of Cordova in Spain, resolved to summon all the bishops of the Christian world to a council to be held at Nicæa in Bithynia, in 325. Thus originated the First General Council of the Church, the first of a long series held for the purpose of settling controversies of faith, and enacting canons of discipline. The idea was that the heads of all the churches of Christendom should meet together in free deliberation, not to enunciate new articles of faith, but to bear witness to the doctrines of the faith which had been handed down from the beginning, and received by all the various churches in the world, however widely separated by race, geographical situation, and language. They professed not to enlarge the area of faith, but to give it full and correct expression, when it was in danger of being misapprehended or falsified. More than three hundred bishops assembled at Nicæa, mostly from the Eastern churches; the great Western church, Rome, was represented by two presbyters, the bishop,

Silvester, being prevented by age from attending in person. The most notable Westerns present were Hosius, Bishop of Cordova, and Cæcilian, Bishop of Carthage. The Council consisted of three parties: (1.) The thorough-going Arians, probably less than twenty in all. (2.) The strongly-convinced anti-Arians, who rallied round Alexander, Bishop of Alexandria, and recognised the absolute necessity of the adoption of some formula which should effectually exclude what they rightly judged to be a deadly heresy, sapping the very foundations of Christianity. These were rather more than thirty in number. They insisted on the adoption of the famous term ὁμοούσιος, rendered in our English version "of one substance" (with the Father), as guarding against all evasive Arian expressions which fell short of a frank acknowledgment of the true Godhead of the Son of God. They formed a compact group, and finally carried the victory. Hosius and Marcellus were prominent among them, but there can be no doubt that they were largely indebted to the indomitable energy and firm intellectual grasp of great principles by Athanasius, who was in attendance on Alexander. (3.) A very large group of moderate and neutral men, above two hundred in number, who did not themselves hold Arian opinions, but failed to see the greatness of the issues at stake; and, disliking the imposition of any test formula of doctrine, would have been content to maintain and hand down to their successors the traditional untechnical creeds, without entering into theological niceties, or devising

measures for the rejection of false doctrine. Their representative and spokesman was Eusebius, Bishop of Cæsarea, and metropolitan. There seems to have been a common consent of all parties to settle the fierce controversy which had arisen by issuing a new creed. "Christendom as yet had had no authoritative creed at all. There was a traditional Rule of Faith, and there was a final standard of doctrine in Scripture, but there was no acknowledged and authoritative symbol, *i.e.*, a watchword and test of sacred doctrine. Different churches had varying Creeds for catechetical use, besides the proper baptismal professions. Some of these were ancient; all were couched in the words of Scripture; and all variously modelled on the Lord's baptismal formula; but there was no universal symbol" (Gwatkin). It was a momentous change to draw up a single document as a standard of orthodoxy for the whole of Christendom.

When, after various preliminary conferences, the first meeting of the great Council took place (May 325), Eusebius of Nicomedia propounded an undisguisedly Arian creed, the reading of which was received with clamorous disapproval, the document itself being torn to shreds by some of the indignant hearers. Then Eusebius of Cæsarea produced a creed which he declared to be the traditional creed of his own church of Cæsarea. That creed, as far as it went, appeared agreeable to Scripture and tradition; but it contained no decisive expression which would

effectually exclude the Arian heresy. The Arians, during the proceedings of the Council and at the preliminary conferences, had been ready with all sorts of evasions. They accepted Scriptural phrases and technical terms in their own sense. Was it urged that the Son of God was like to the Father in all things, they admitted this, but urged that in the same way man was "the image and glory of God." Was the Son from God? so also are men, they replied, for it is written, "There is one God, from whom are all things." Was the Son eternal? of men, they replied, it is written, "We which live are alway" (2 Cor. iv. 11). The presiding Emperor, instigated in all probability by Hosius, demanded that to take away all doubt there should be added to the Creed the one famous Greek word ὁμοούσιος, which would declare the Son to be "of one substance" with the Father. The Council thought that on the momentous occasion of drawing up a symbol of orthodoxy for the entire Church, it would be wiser to reconsider the whole Creed presented. They introduced several alterations and additions, and finally drew up a revised Creed. This original Nicene Creed, it is important to remind all English Churchmen, is not the Creed which we commonly call the Nicene Creed, and recite in our public Liturgy. It is briefer, and in some important particulars different in phraseology. The portion of it relating to the doctrine of the Person of Christ runs thus: "[We believe] in One Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten from the Father, only begotten—that is, from the essence of

the Father—God from God, Light from Light, very God from very God, begotten, not made; of one essence with the Father, though whom all things were made, both those in heaven and those in earth; who for us men and for our salvation came down, and was made flesh, was made man, suffered, and rose again on the third day, ascended into heaven, coming to judge the living and the dead." This revised Creed, every expression of which was advisedly adopted as precluding false doctrine, was almost unanimously accepted by the Council. Two bishops only refused to sign it. Unhappily, an evil precedent was set by the banishment of these two dissentient bishops, and of Arius himself. The cause of Alexander and his Egyptian fellow-bishops had triumphed. Young Athanasius, described to us by his contemporaries as little in stature, with aquiline nose, small mouth, auburn hair, and piercingly keen eyes, rendered important service to his archbishop and his colleagues by supplying them, from the fulness of his Scriptural knowledge and his speculative acuteness, with powerful arguments against the admission of the blighting heresy which was threatening the very life of the Church. What these arguments were we can reasonably conjecture from his later treatises in defence of the decrees of the Council. They would doubtless have maintained that the true Godhead of Jesus Christ was attested in many passages of Scripture, was implied in His unique Sonship, was necessary to any true conception of the meaning and effect of the Incarnation,

and was all along presupposed by the place which the Church had from the beginning given to Jesus Christ in her worship.

Athanasius, then, in his youthful days no less than in his later career of struggle and persecution, was profoundly imbued with an intense sense of the significance of the controversy. "It was an essentially Christian interest which actuated him." Arianism was in his judgement a blasphemous dishonour done to his Divine Lord and Master. The love of Christ constrained him to vindicate His true Godhead. He was not devoted to the terms of technical theology as such; he welcomed and defended them, because they were decisive protests against a doctrine which would reduce Jesus Christ to the proportions of a simple creature, and place Him on a level with any of the demigods of heathenism.

The Nicene Council had lasted for nearly three months. Three years after its conclusion, Bishop Alexander died. On his death-bed he practically designated Athanasius as his successor. While his clergy stood around him, he called for Athanasius. Another, who bore the same name as the favourite deacon, answered. The aged patriarch took no notice, and again called for Athanasius, saying, "You think to escape: it cannot be." Athanasius was absent on some mission, but was elected in his absence. In the heat of controversy, at a later time, charges were brought against his election as irregular and secret; but the Egyptian bishops publicly testified that the whole

multitude, and all the people of the Catholic Church, assembled together as with one mind and body, cried out that Athanasius should be their bishop, and made this the subject of their prayers to Christ. They called him good, pious, Christian, ascetic, a genuine bishop. The date of his election, though disputed, seems to have been June 8, 328. Thus, at the age of thirty, did Athanasius find himself in the influential position of Patriarch of Alexandria, and the foremost representative, both by his official position and by his intellectual pre-eminence, of the Catholic faith, in its declared antagonism to the novelties of the Arian heresy. His elevation proved to him the beginning of a life-long career of theological controversy and severe suffering for the truth's sake. The triumph of the orthodox faith at the Nicene Council had been premature, and almost too unanimous. Men were not prepared for the full realisation of the importance of the conclusion which had been formulated. There was a reaction in the direction of Arianism. The leading bishops who had supported the Arian cause tried to diminish the success of their opponents; they once more regained the favour of the Emperor; they brought numerous charges against some of the bishops of the opposed party, and in some cases, notably that of Eustathius, Bishop of Antioch, procured their deposition. They aimed specially at two great objects, the restoration of Arius himself to communion at Alexandria, and the extrusion of Athanasius. The Emperor Constantine himself was persuaded to write

a letter to Athanasius, demanding the restoration to communion of Arius and his friends. Athanasius remained firm in his assertion of Church discipline, declaring that the Christ-opposing heresy had no fellowship with the Catholic Church. Thereupon began a whole series of attacks and charges against the great bishop personally, brought forward with unrelenting frequency by his enemies, often backed by all the force of the Imperial power, in consequence of which this intrepid Churchman became for half a century the most prominent figure in Church history. He lived to occupy his high post for full forty years, during which he was driven into exile no less than five times. One of his earliest biographers divides the whole life of Athanasius into periods of quiet and exile. There were over seventeen years spent in exile. It is impossible to follow all these out in detail, but to have any adequate conception of the striking personality of the great bishop, and to appreciate some of the mean devices of his adversaries, it is requisite to recall some of the stories which were told against him. The most famous, which is not without elements of humour, is connected with the name of Arsenius. Arsenius was bishop of a little town of Upper Egypt, Hypsēle. He was induced to go into hiding, among the monks of the neighbourhood; and to account for his disappearance, it was alleged that Athanasius had had him murdered, and his hand cut off for magical purposes. The hand was shown about in a wooden box, as ocular proof of the charge. At a council held at Tyre,

amongst a multitude of other accusations brought against Athanasius, this was revived, though it had before been proved that Arsenius was alive, having been spirited off to Tyre, where he had vainly endeavoured to conceal his identity. The dead man's hand was once more exhibited. Athanasius quietly asked, Did any one here know Arsenius? Several said they did. Athanasius then brought forward a man muffled in a large cloak, then told him to raise his head and look round, and asked, Is not this Arsenius? He drew from behind the cloak first one hand, and then, after a judicious pause, the other, and with calm irony observed, "I suppose no one thinks that God has given to any man more hands than two." Another story urged against him at the same time was that he had commissioned one of his attendant clergy to enter into a chapel where one Ischyras was celebrating Holy Communion, and that this outrage had been accompanied by breaking the chalice containing the consecrated wine, burning the church books, and upsetting the holy table. It was proved that Ischyras was not authorised to celebrate the Eucharist, having never received episcopal ordination; and Ischyras himself signed a statement denying the whole charge, which he had made, he said, under violent threats, though subsequently he was induced to retract this confession. Athanasius, despairing of receiving justice at the hands of Count Dionysius, before whom these accusations were made at Tyre, suddenly resolved to appeal to the Emperor in person. He sailed with five of his bishops

to Constantinople, and astounded the Emperor by meeting him suddenly, as he was riding in one of the streets of his capital, and demanding to be heard by him in the presence of his accusers. The Emperor, either really or in pretence, failed to recognise the intrepid bishop at first, but soon granted his request. He summoned the bishops of the council at Tyre to Constantinople; the greater part fled home in dismay. Some few obeyed the summons, but abandoning all the old charges, the weakness of which they must have perceived, preferred a new charge of a totally different kind. They declared that Athanasius had hindered the sailing of the ships which sailed from Alexandria, carrying corn to Constantinople. Athanasius indignantly denied that he, a private individual, could have done this had he wished. Whether the Emperor really believed the accusation, or whether he thought that he might avail himself of such a political charge to send Athanasius into safe retreat, and thereby promote, as he hoped, the peace of the Church, is doubtful. But he sent Athanasius into honourable exile at Trèves, on the Moselle, where his younger son, Constantine, was then residing. There Athanasius remained more than a year. Arius died that same year quite suddenly. Constantine, who was baptized on his death-bed, died in the next year, 337, and within six months, by the will of the young Emperor Constantine, Athanasius was restored to Alexandria. Fresh intrigues broke out then. Constantius, another son of Constantine, who succeeded to the Empire of the East, favoured the

Arian cause. Arian bishops, first Pistus, then Gregory, a Cappadocian, were intruded into Athanasius' see, on the plea that Athanasius, having been deposed by a Church Council, had no right to return merely upon the permission of an Emperor. A hostile prefect was sent to govern Alexandria, and, under the united opposition of heathens and Jews, Athanasius was once more expelled, and took refuge at Rome, April 339. That exile lasted for seven years and a half, part of which was spent in Milan, Treves, and Aquileia. By the express desire of the Emperor Constantius, Athanasius was restored to his see in 346. There is a vivid account of the joy and moral effect produced by his return (Oct. 21st). The bishops of Egypt and Libya, and the laity of Alexandria, ran together, and were possessed with unspeakable delight, that they had not only received their friends alive contrary to their hopes, but that they were delivered from the heretics, who were as tyrants towards them. The people in the congregations encouraged one another in virtue. So great was their emulation in virtue, that you would have thought every family and every house a church, by reason of the goodness of the inmates, and the prayers which were offered to God; and in the Church there was a profound and wonderful peace ("Hist. of Arians," 25). There followed a period of quiet, which has been called the golden decade in the episcopate of Athanasius (346–356). It was terminated by an act of violence. Under secret instructions from the Court party, an Imperial

general, Syrianus, at the head of a large body of soldiers, broke into a crowded church, where Athanasius was holding a midnight service. The great archbishop displayed quiet dignity and intrepidity. Seated on his throne, he ordered the deacon to begin Psalm cxxxvi., the people repeating the response, "For His mercy endureth for ever!" He refused to leave the church till the entire congregation had made good their escape, and then half-fainting and exhausted, he was carried out by a body of clergy and monks, and the third exile, which lasted six years, began. That was spent in concealment, in the retreats of the monks and hermits in Egypt, with occasional secret visits to Alexandria. During this period Athanasius wrote half of his now extant works, amongst them one of his most celebrated doctrinal treatises, the "Orations against the Arians." The death of his inveterate persecutor Constantius made Julian sole Emperor, who now openly apostatised to heathenism, and then recalled from exile all the bishops banished by Constantius. So Athanasius once more returned to Alexandria, February 21, 362.

Julian drove Athanasius away in a short time as an enemy of the gods, only too successful in winning cultivated men to the faith of Christ, which the new Emperor had renounced. The bishop took boat and sailed up the Nile. Pursued by the government officers, he ordered the boat to reverse its course. The pursuers soon met it. They asked for news about Athanasius. A voice said, "He is not far off." It was

Athanasius himself. When all danger was over, he again retreated to his beloved monks in the Thebaid. The death of Julian in Persia allowed him to return within sixteen months. He obtained authority from the new Emperor, Jovian, to retain his see. The vacillating policy of the Imperial power revoked this leave. A rescript arrived at Alexandria for the bishop's expulsion. He retired for about four months to his country-house. To quiet popular discontent, the rescript was annulled, and so Athanasius returned for a fifth time, now to end his stormy career in comparative peace, after a quiet period of seven years. At the age of seventy-five he died in the presence of his clergy, having commended Peter as his fittest successor. One of the most eminent writers of Church history (Tillemont) speaks of the whole life of Athanasius as having been a continual martyrdom.

A man who played so important a part in the history of the Church of his day: so valiant an upholder of the primitive faith, so absolutely disinterested in the exercise of his enormous influence, so unspoiled by the temptations of high position, so proof against flattery, inspired with such a deep, devout loyalty to the Person of the Lord and Saviour, has naturally drawn upon himself the attention alike of historian and theologian in all subsequent ages. He has won for himself the epithet of Athanasius the Great—from enthusiastic admirers and from unsympathetic critics. It may help to the fuller realisation of his greatness, if some of the more remarkable testimonies to his

character are quoted. A noble, if somewhat exaggerated, panegyric was pronounced upon him by one of his most eminent contemporaries, the eloquent Gregory Nazianzen. "Athanasius," said the orator, "was as humble in his mind as he was sublime in his life; a man of an inimitable virtue, and yet withal so courteous, that any might freely address him; of an angelical look, but much more of an angelic temper and disposition; mild in his reproofs, and instructive in his commendations. He was a patron to the widows, a father to orphans, a friend to the poor, a harbour to strangers, a brother to brethren, a physician to the sick, a keeper of the healthful—one who became all things to all men, that if not all, he might at least gain the more. To commend Athanasius was the same thing as to commend virtue itself. The course of his life was accounted the standard of the episcopal function, and his doctrine the rule of orthodoxy. He was the pillar of the faith, and a second John the Baptist" (Cave, "Lives of the Fathers," ii. 191). Our own Hooker, in concluding his luminous account of the Arian controversy, has summed up in memorable words: "Only in Athanasius there was nothing observed throughout the course of that long tragedy, other than such as very well became a righteous man to do, and a righteous man to suffer. So that this was the plain condition of those times: the whole world against Athanasius, and Athanasius against it; half a hundred of years spent in doubtful trial which of the two in the end would prevail—the side which had

all, or else the part which had no friend but God and death; the one a defender of his innocency, the other a finisher of his troubles." Gibbon, the unbelieving author of the "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," ever ready to disparage and sneer at Christianity, is subdued into admiration of this great theologian (Gibbon, "Decline and Fall," chap. 21). "The immortal name of Athanasius," he writes, "will never be separated from the Catholic doctrine of the Trinity, to whose defence he consecrated every moment and every faculty of his being. Amid the storms of persecution, the Archbishop of Alexandria was patient of labour, jealous of fame, careless of safety; and although his mind was tainted by the contagion of fanaticism, Athanasius displayed a superiority of character and abilities, which would have qualified him, far better than the degenerate son of Constantine, for the government of a great monarchy. His learning was much less profound and extensive than that of Eusebius of Cæsarea, and his rude eloquence could not be compared with the polished oratory of Gregory or Basil; but whenever the primate of Egypt was called upon to justify his sentiments or his conduct, his unpremeditated style, either of speaking or writing, was clear, forcible, and persuasive. The knowledge of human nature was his first and most important science. He preserved a distinct and unbroken view of a scene which was incessantly shifting, and never failed to improve these decisive moments which are irrecoverably past, before they are perceived by a common eye. Nor was it

only in ecclesiastical assemblies, among men whose education and manners were similar to his own, that Athanasius displayed the ascendency of his genius. He appeared with easy and respectful firmness in the courts of princes; and in the various turns of his prosperous and adverse fortune, he never lost the confidence of his friends, or the esteem of his enemies."

The historical imagination of Dean Stanley was kindled into sympathetic eloquence, when in his famous Oxford lectures on the History of the Eastern Church, he delineated the career of Athanasius in the picturesque and dramatic form which none who, like myself, heard it could ever forget. Extracts give no adequate idea of its brilliance. Let me only cite two passages. "It is by its solitary protest against subservience to the religious fashion of his age that the life of Athanasius has acquired a proverbial significance, which cannot be too often impressed on theological students. This is the permanent lesson which his life teaches. It is the same as that which we are taught by the life of Elijah in the history of the Jewish Church, and by the lives of some of the early Reformers in the Christian Church." And again: "The qualities which seem most forcibly to have struck the contemporaries of Athanasius have been the readiness and versatility of his gifts. An Oxford poet, in the *Lyra Apostolica*, has sang of—

> 'The royal-hearted Athanase,
> With Paul's own mantle blest.'

Whatever may have been the intention of this comparison, it is certain that there was a resemblance between the flexibility of Athanasius and the many-sided character of the Apostle whose boast it was to have made himself 'all things to all men.' None such had occurred before, and none such occurred again till the time of Augustine, perhaps not till the time of Francis Xavier."

The name of Athanasius as a theologian is identified with his maintenance of two great cardinal doctrines of the Christian faith, the Incarnation and the Holy Trinity. His keen interest in upholding and expounding these primary truths was due to his passionate devotion to the Person of Jesus Christ, his Lord and Master. He did not so much believe in a series of doctrines which might in their aggregate be called Christianity, as in Christ Himself, as being in His own Person the revelation of God, God manifest in the flesh. Almost his very earliest work, written when he was a young deacon only twenty years of age, was a treatise on the incarnation of the Word of God. This treatise, as has been said (Dorner), "gives us the groundwork of a grand system of speculative Christian theology. He regarded the coming of Christ into the world of humanity as being a recreation of man, a restoration of lost dignity, and goodness, and knowledge. And so starting with a clear conception of the being of God as being distinct from the universe, though immanent in it by His Word or Logos, as the principle of harmony, he enunciates how God, of His goodness,

made the world, and took a special interest in man. Man was created in God's own image, being endowed with the power of the Logos, and by union with this Logos was made capable of immortality. But man disobeyed the Divine command under which he was placed; sin came into the world, and with it death. The image of God was destroyed; the work of God was overthrown. But the Divine threat of punishment, the pledged word of God, remained. Was the work of God to perish? This would have been unworthy of omnipotence, and inconsistent with God's love. Mere repentance would not be sufficient to repair the evil: the mere will of God could not undo the past, consistently with His righteousness and truthfulness. The Word of God alone could help. He who is incorporeal, imperishable, omnipresent, revealed Himself by coming in human flesh. A new creation took place. He through whom the Father created the world came to renew it. Having taken flesh and blood, He was able to give His body to death for all: the law was annulled by being fulfilled—man's debt was paid. And by His death the Word became capable of resurrection, and so overcame death, not for Himself alone, but for all those whose nature he had taken. Men die still, it is true; but only in order that they likewise may participate in the resurrection to a better state. The Incarnation was further designed to restore the true knowledge of God. Men were to learn the character of God by seeing the works which the Word of God made flesh wrought

in His body. The benefits of the Incarnation are declared to be innumerable. "As one cannot take in the whole of the waves of the sea with his eyes, for those which are coming on baffle the sense of him that attempts it, so to him that would take in all the achievements of Christ in the body, it is impossible to take in the whole, even by reckoning them up." "The very Word of God was made man, that we might be made God; and He manifested Himself by a body, that we might receive the idea of the unseen Father; and He endured the insolence of men, that we might inherit immortality." In this Athanasian theory of the Incarnation we should notice specially that, in contrast with some later popular theories, the Redemption is represented as prompted by the love of God the Father, and not by the mercy of the Son intervening to pacify the wrath of the Father; that Christ's death on the Cross was not a ransom paid to the evil one, as so many ancient theologians dreamed, but a satisfaction of the Divine law of holiness; that the Incarnation had not for its sole object atonement, but also regeneration, and the restoration of the Divine image in man; and it is never hinted that Christ was *punished* in our stead. He voluntarily surrendered Himself to undergo the sentence of death, and by the grace of His resurrection to restore man to a new life.

When in his earliest manhood Athanasius wrote his beautiful and thoughtful treatise on the Incarnation, he did not deem it necessary to discuss the true

relation of the personal Word of God to the eternal Father. He was addressing then the unbelieving outside world of Jews and heathen, proving to the one by the fulfilment of prophecy, and to the other by the acknowledged triumphs of the Cross, that Jesus must have been the revelation of a Divine Person clothed in human form. The theophany which Christianity proclaimed was an Incarnation, the manifestation of a God-man. But almost immediately after the appearance of the earliest works of Athanasius in the department of Christian philosophy, there arose the Arian controversy, which turned upon the question of the true Godhead of Jesus Christ, and the relation which He, as Son of God, bore to God the Father Almighty. This controversy occupied the whole subsequent life of Athanasius. He felt it to involve a question of life or death. The true Godhead of Jesus Christ was to him the article of a standing or falling Church; for Arianism sought to establish that Jesus was not in the truest and highest sense God. It maintained that He was a created being, anterior indeed to all the rest of creation, but still originally made out of nothing—there was a time when He was not. Athanasius protested with all his soul against this conception of a fantastic Son of God, who was neither truly God nor truly man, a sort of half-God. The appearance in the world of such a being would not have been a true intervention of God on behalf of man; it could not have effected a true reconciliation between God and man; it could not have afforded the

means for the re-creation and restoration of man. To worship Christ with Divine honours, as had always been the practice of the Church, was on the Arian theory only another form of idolatry: it postulated at least two gods; it associated the supreme God in adoration with another inferior God. Athanasius insisted that this disparaging estimate of the Person of Jesus Christ was an innovation on the teaching of the Catholic Church, and above all was contrary to the teaching of Holy Scripture. He affirmed that Jesus must be acknowledged as of one substance or of one essence with the Father, and so truly God. It is futile to say that this was a mere dispute about words. It is an unintelligent sneer on the part of an infidel historian, to say that the Christian world was convulsed about the omission or insertion of a single letter, because the two Greek words which expressed the Catholic doctrine that Jesus was of *one* essence with the Father, and the Arian doctrine that He was of *like* essence, differed only by the little letter iota. The dispute was about things, not words. Athanasius was not a stickler for a particular word or phrase as expressive of the true doctrine: he would be content with any formula which would exclude the false notion of inferior Godhead. The Nicene Creed, which, as we have seen, was determined by the first great General Council of the Christian Church, in the year 325, and in which Athanasius, as deacon of his bishop, took an active part, declared that the Lord Jesus Christ was "God of (*i.e.*, from) God, Light of Light, very God of

very God, begotten, not made, of one essence or substance with the Father." The whole troublous career of Athanasius throughout a long life was devoted to the defence of this great doctrine of the faith. But it is incumbent on us to remember that he defended it, not as a correct conclusion of philosophical speculation, but as a necessary support of Christian faith and life. He could not see how men could be loyal to Christ, if they were not prepared without evasion to acknowledge His true and proper Godhead.

A living writer has said, "The motive of the intense and lifelong battle of Athanasius against the Arian party was his instinctive sense and his clear conviction that the error set on foot by Arius, however disguised, struck at the root of that absolute devotion to the Saviour, which was the animating motive of his own life and of the life of the Church. There could be no greater perversion of history than the accusation continually made against St. Athanasius, and against the Church of that day, that they set on foot rash speculations into the nature of the Godhead. The speculation on the nature of God was all on the other side. The dogma for which St. Athanasius contended, instead of being a metaphysical subtlety, involves the very substance of Christian life and practice. The issues at stake in the contest were primarily moral, and the result was one of the greatest moral and spiritual victories in the history of the Church."[1]

Perhaps it may be necessary to say, in conclusion,

[1] Dr. Wace in *Good Words* for 1878, pp. 685–87.

that Athanasius was not the author of the Creed which commonly goes under his name. A doubt about the popular opinion of its authorship is suggested by the very wording of the rubric in the Prayer Book, which prescribes its use on certain days: "Then shall be sung or said this confession of our Christian faith, commonly called the Creed of Saint Athanasius." Who was the author of that formulary is uncertain—its ascription to any special theologian is at present only matter of conjecture; but all the most trustworthy scholars are now agreed that it could not have been written by Athanasius, for its original language is Latin and not Greek, and many clauses of it have obviously been derived from the treatise on the Trinity, by St. Augustine, which was not published till the year 416, more than forty years after the death of Athanasius. Therefore Athanasius is not responsible for the so-called damnatory clauses of the Creed, which have caused so much distress and perplexity to pious minds; and it is doubtful whether he would have acquiesced in every expression of the exposition contained in the document. This falsely-called Athanasian Creed is, however, in its main substance a valuable setting forth of the Nicene faith, drawn up for the instruction of the churches of Western Christendom. The great controversy of faith between the Church and the world, in our own days as well as in the early centuries, turns upon the answer given to the question, "What think ye of Christ?" If He be not the very Son of God, then it is a delusion to call Him our Redeemer and

Saviour, and to worship and pray to Him. He can be no more to us than an Example and an Ideal. Arianism, which would make Him an inferior God, is almost dead as a phase of belief; modern Unitarianism, which falsely appropriates to itself a name which belongs as truly to believers in the truth of the Blessed Trinity, whose first article of belief is, "I believe in one God," reduces Him to the level of simply human proportions. The Catholic Church owes its inheritance of the confession of a true faith by the acknowledgment of the glory of the Eternal Trinity, and its worship of the Unity, to the life and labours of the great Athanasius.

Life and Times of St. Ambrose.

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LIFE AND TIMES OF ST. AMBROSE.

THE object of these Lectures, if I understand it correctly, is historical rather than biographical. Their purpose is not the commemoration of great individual Churchmen in themselves, but the illustration, through their lives, of salient points in Church history. I shall endeavour, therefore, to speak of St. Ambrose mainly in the light in which Dean Milman has most truly described him, as one of the three great founders of the system of doctrine and discipline characteristic of Latin Christianity—the founder of the sacerdotal authority of the Latin Church, as St. Jerome of Western monasticism, and St. Augustine of Western theology.[1]

There is fortunately little difficulty in reading the general story of his life. Its main facts are brought out in almost contemporary records; the inner personality of the man himself, the character of his teaching, and his relations to the leading men of his time, are plainly set forth by his own hand, in his various

[1] See Milman's "Latin Christianity," book ii. c. 4 (vol. i. p. 283 of edition of 1883).

writings, and especially in his numerous letters, public and private.[1]

(1.) It is clear that his early life and education were especially adapted for training him in the school of ecclesiastical statesmanship.

He was born (probably in the year A.D. 340)[2] of a Roman family of high rank—his father, Ambrosius, being at the head of the Præfecture of Gaul, Spain, and Britain, one of the four great Prætorian Præfectures of the Empire. He was not only of Christian parentage, but of Christian education also. Strangely, as it seems to us, he was unbaptized up to the age of thirty-four, probably through religious awe of the sanctity of Holy Baptism, and of the heinousness of post-baptismal sin. His whole training was emphatically a lay-training, both in respect of his liberal education in Roman literature and law, and of his early initiation in the service of the State. By the Præfect of Rome he was made Consular Magistrate in the province of Liguria and Æmilia, with the somewhat remarkable charge, afterwards held to be pro-

[1] The Benedictine Edition of St. Ambrose gives first the Life of the Saint, written by his secretary Paulinus, and the Life written in Greek by Theodoret in the next generation; then an admirable biography drawn up by the editors, chiefly from his own writings; and lastly, an attempt to fix approximately the dates of his various works. From this most, if not all, of the notices of his Life,—as in the Dictionary of Christian Biography by the Rev. J. Ll. Davies, in Robertson's "Church History" (book ii. c. 5), and in Wordsworth's "Church History" (vol. iii. c. 2, pp. 16–82)—appear to be mainly drawn.

[2] The date of his birth has to be gathered from an allusion in his own writings (Ep. lxix. 3). Some place it seven years earlier; but the date given in the text is generally accepted.

phetic, "Go, act not as a judge, but as a bishop"—not to punish, that is, but to direct and guide—with an obvious allusion to the original sense of the word *episcopus*, but with an equally obvious reference to the prominence and moral significance, which the episcopate of the Church had attained. In this office it is clear, by the sequel, that his vigorous ability, high character, ready oratory, and singularly genial disposition, won for him universal popularity and confidence.

It was in the discharge of this magistracy that the call came to him to assume high office in the Church of God. On the vacancy of the see of Milan, a conflict as to the succession arose between the Arian party, hitherto, it would seem, predominant, and the upholders of the Catholic Creed of Nicæa. Ambrose, as chief magistrate, came down to keep the peace between the contending parties; he was in the act of addressing the people, when suddenly the cry arose —started, it was said, by a child's voice, but soon swelling into a popular acclamation—"Ambrose for our bishop." Unordained, even unbaptized, he was thus suddenly called. Should he accept the *Vox Populi* as the *Vox Dei?* The call must have been absolutely unexpected. Naturally he shrank from it, not only from the deep sense of its sacred responsibility, but from a consciousness of his want of ecclesiastical knowledge and ecclesiastical training. He felt, as he said, the difficulty of having to learn what he would be at once called upon to teach. He had to give up a career of public service, which he could understand

and pursue with success, for one which, as yet, he knew only vaguely and from without. The *Nolo Episcopari* was never more sincerely uttered. By the strangest devices (if we may believe his rather uncritical biographer Paulinus) he tried to show the people his unfitness; but they would not see. "Let thy sin be upon us," was their cry again and again. They invoked the Imperial authority of Valentinian; they drew Ambrose from the retirement in which he hid himself. They would have him, even against his will; and they were right. The popular instinct had here, as so often, pierced to the heart of things. Perhaps the very fact that he had not been brought up as an ecclesiastic was a recommendation, in times which needed a large-minded and conciliatory governor of the Church. Ambrose yielded at last. In a few days he was baptized, passed by Ordination through the lower grades of the Ministry, and consecrated to the Episcopate in the year 374.

(2.) Neither his character nor his education fitted him for becoming, like St. Jerome, a deep student and critic, or, like St. Augustine, a great theologian—a teacher not of his own age only, but of all the ages of the Church. He was a true Roman in his capacity for rule and dominance over men, and in devotion to Empire. But the Empire which he rejoiced to serve, was a kingdom of God, having a Divine mission to build up and mould anew all human society, and exercising that mission through the Ministers of Christ, as the stewards of the mysteries of God. He pro-

foundly believed in its right, in virtue of that mission to rule not only the religious but the secular life—to make the kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of the Lord and His Christ—to confront the Imperial Majesty, although recognised as the ordinance of God, with a higher prophetic authority, speaking in His name and ministering His grace.

It was the task which, beyond all others, the time and the circumstances demanded. A great ruler and organizer was needed even more than a great teacher. When he entered on his episcopate, the great Arian controversy was all but over. St. Athanasius had died only a year before; and, ere he was called to rest, after a lifelong battle for Christian truth, and for the assertion of the Divine mystery, had been permitted to see the signs of the approaching victory, which was to be consummated in 381 at the great Council of Constantinople, and accepted in Italy by a lesser council at Aquileia, presided over by St. Ambrose himself. The Arianizing despotism of Constantius, and the pagan reaction under Julian, had vainly invoked against the Catholic truth the whole force of the Imperial power. For the time there was rest on the Nicene Creed; the subtler Nestorian and Eutychian controversies, both accepting and seeking to rationalize its central mystery, had not yet begun. The Western Church, indeed, throughout the whole of the century, had only felt in a secondary degree the convulsion of these theological struggles for the life and death of the Christian. Now, faith

against both paganism itself, and the veiled paganism of the Arian heresy, the orthodoxy of the West had but to maintain an already victorious cause.

But it must have been clear to those who had eyes to see, that, as St. Augustine was soon to show in his great *Civitas Dei*, the old pagan and Imperial order in the West was breaking up, and that on the Church of Christ, now victorious after its three centuries of struggle with the Empire, devolved the task of building up human society on a higher and more spiritual type. The Imperial autocracy, which in the East had assumed something of the character of Oriental despotism, and of which the almost contemporary history of St. Chrysostom shows the fatal power in spiritual things, was still tempered in the West, partly by the old Roman traditions, partly by the greater independence of Western character, partly by the freer development of Church authority. In conjunction with it while it still lasted—in virtual substitution for it when it passed away—the Church had to create an order in the whole of human life, which should build up in one the old Roman civilisation, and the new life of the so-called barbarian races, now already mingling with the Latin blood. So St. Cyprian had already seen; in his *Unitas Ecclesiæ*, the first conception of this task of moulding and dominating human society had been brought out. On his foundation St. Ambrose was to build; and the resolute and confident spirit in which, as a consecrated servant of God, he carried out the work, is

witnessed to in the well-known words of the great Theodosius, that "never till he knew St. Ambrose had he known a true bishop"—a true overseer, that is, and ruler in the kingdom of God.

Naturally this strong assertion of a kingdom of Christ necessitated the fuller organisation of that kingdom, and therefore the realisation and exaltation of what is usually known as "sacerdotal power"—the authority, that is, and sacredness of the Christian Ministry, and especially of the episcopate—its right to minister with that authority the Word and the Sacraments, and to exercise the power of the keys—its call through these ministrations to rule over all things in the Church of Christ.

This growth of clerical power was as yet in its earlier stages. The conflict which it necessarily brought on with the Imperial power had hardly commenced. The concentration, with a view to that conflict, of all ecclesiastical dominion in the see of Rome, as at once the Imperial city and the Apostolic See of the West, showed at most its first beginnings. It was the Archbishop of Milan, and not the Pope of Rome, who was by force of character *primus inter pares*—the leader of his age, alike in matters distinctly ecclesiastical, and in those which asserted Christian authority over the secular life.

That leadership could, of course, be firmly and boldly exercised only by one who believed thoroughly in the sacredness of ministerial authority, and who had under all circumstances the courage of his opinions. Such unquestioning faith and such undaunted courage,

St. Ambrose expressed both in his life and in his writings. "The laity," he said at Aquileia, "ought to be judged by the priests, not the priests by the laity." But at the same time it may be, I think, safely asserted that his lay experience and education especially fitted him to win adhesion to the authority which he claimed; for it could not but give him larger knowledge of human nature and human life, of the actual thoughts and needs of Roman society, and of the influences which rule men generally, both in mind and heart. It certainly gave him a greater breadth of sympathy, and that remarkable capacity for natural affection which he showed in his tender domestic relations to his brother Satyrus and his sister Marcellina, and in the strong attachment, half paternal, half reverential, which bound him to the young Gratian and Valentinian II., and to the great Theodosius himself. It was the secret of his extraordinary popular influence, and of the undoubted power of his public speaking, which, although, perhaps without the magic of the highest eloquence, yet, as St. Augustine testifies, drew to him both the minds and the hearts of the people. These are qualities essentially necessary, if not for the wielding of ecclesiastical power already established, certainly for building it up in its earlier stages; for the effectiveness of such power depends ultimately on the free adhesion of public opinion and sympathy, created not only by a belief in its rightfulness, but also by the sense of its social necessity and of its practical social beneficence.

All history shows us that, while it has these, it is irresistible; but that, when these fail, it vanishes at once, "like the baseless fabric of a vision."

The assertion of such a power is at all times a thing encompassed by difficulty, and yielding mixed results of strange and often mournful inconsistency. The problem of all good government is of course how to harmonize central power with individual freedom—therefore to rule by authority rather than by force—to rely on a free obedience to its law, not in the letter but in the spirit, but to count also on a loyal adhesion, even beyond the requirements of law, in the spirit of willing self-sacrifice. But the need and difficulty of this harmony are especially felt in the Church of Christ, because the unity which binds it together is, first, the invisible unity of each soul with Christ, which is the secret of a spiritual individuality, and next, through this, the visible unity of all with one another, which must express itself in law and order, a common discipleship, and common sacraments and worship.

Now the ecclesiastical power, exercised through the ordained ministers of the Church, has always claimed to be a spiritual power. As we read Church history, we have continually to ask ourselves, How far is this claim justified? and a right answer needs something of that discrimination and qualification, which are necessary at all times in judging of human things.

So far as, allowing for human error and frailty, it has proved its truth—so far, that is, as it has been really a moral power, through and beyond law, main-

taining, especially in ages of conflict and change and revolution, the Divine strength of righteousness against material force, of purity against covetousness and lust, of humanity and charity against selfish violence—so far as it has shown itself a religious power, bidding men rise above mere worldliness of luxury and ambition, to seek the things which concern their higher humanity, because they belong to the light and grace of Christ, in the soul and in the Church, and are an earnest of the perfection which we call heaven—so far as it has been a power of true unity, at once hallowing and exalting the natural ties of family and nation and race, and creating the supernatural tie of the Communion of Saints—so far as for these high missions it has been content to use spiritual weapons for spiritual ends, with as little admixture as may be of temporal force and coercion—so far we can follow its rise and growth with unhesitating sympathy and reverence. For to do even the least thing to foster and to extend it is among the highest of human privileges.

In these respects it is, in the true sense of the word, ecclesiastical rather than clerical or sacerdotal. But so far again, as in the latter aspect, it has simply maintained the sacred commission, and the sacred gift of grace to discharge it, which belong to the very idea of the Christian Ministry, as a delegation not from the body of the Church but from Christ its Head—so far as it has defended this authority against the oppression and corruption of the power of the world—so far as it has claimed for the clergy their right leadership of teach-

ing and authority in the representation of the whole Church—so far, I say, it is within its right, and true to its duty.

But, on the other hand, *corruptio optimi pessima;* and unhappily in both these aspects corruption was but too easy. If the exercise of this ecclesiastical power was used for base, cruel, ambitious ends, degrading what claimed to be spiritual down to, or even below, the level of the world, it not only failed of its high mission of morality, of spirituality, of unity, but, by the necessity of the case, reversed it to the infinite harm of all human society. If, again, for good ends, it used means which were tainted with falsehood and dishonesty and cunning, and which shrank not even from violence and bloodshed, in the attempt to coerce an obedience which ought to be free, then it necessarily became the enemy of liberty and of conscience, and lowered the whole idea of even elementary morality. If, once more, in its assertion of the clerical authority, it was not content with its rightful spiritual leadership, but usurped an absolute power, both over the religious and the secular life, using for the maintenance of that power the ministration of the Sacraments and of the gift of Absolution, which is simply a stewardship for God, and which all members of the Church have a right to claim, provided that they fulfil its appointed conditions—practically identifying the cause of the clergy with the cause of the Church, and denying to its lay members any voice whatever in its government and teaching, except in the merest tempor-

alities;—then it became an usurpation, despotic and tyrannical, even to persecution, while it lasted, and whenever it gave way, likely to open the floodgates of revolution and secularity.

Nor should we fail to notice that, as in the political, so in the ecclesiastical sphere, while the essential right and need of authority remain unchanged, yet both the method and the degree of its actual exercise will vary with circumstance and with time. What may be wise and right in one age will be an anachronism in another. As the subjects of any kingdom advance in intelligence, in thought, in boldness of individuality, it is the wisdom of authority—a wisdom unhappily too seldom shown—to give more and more scope to freedom, even at the risk of some error and vagary; to do less by rigid law, more by trusting to spiritual influences, and to the "Natural (or Supernatural) selection," which, out of conflict and confusion, secures the survival of that which is morally and spiritually fittest. So it is most notably in respect of Church government. Had the lesson been learnt in the sixteenth century, the great disruption of that century would in all probability have never been.

(3.) Now in surveying the career of St. Ambrose, we shall, I think see two things very plainly—first, that, as I have said, the time cried out for the strong Church authority which he maintained; and next, that on the whole, in his hands, it showed the characteristics of a really spiritual power, and therefore did real and important work for good.

Called, as we have seen, unexpectedly to the episcopal office, he threw himself into its work with an absolute and single-hearted devotion. At once he divested himself of all worldly interests and anxieties in respect of his wealth, which was not inconsiderable. Much he gave up to the work of the Church itself; the rest he committed unreservedly to the loyal and careful guardianship of his dearly-loved brother Satyrus. Thus set free, he devoted all his thought and strong practical energy to his ecclesiastical and spiritual duty. The very fact that he had, as he said, to learn and teach at once, gave perhaps some crudity, but at the same time much freshness, to his teaching. His mind was rather quick and vigorous than profound: in almost all the works which he has left us, we trace not so much the thinker as the preacher and the orator; and we are told that his preaching was singularly popular and effective, because of that supreme moral purpose running through it all, which —perhaps more than eloquence, certainly more than philosophic and theologic depth—tells upon the minds of all people, educated and uneducated alike. He himself knew where his real power lay. When the young Emperor Gratian, about to set out to support against the barbarian invaders his uncle Valens, who was the last great Imperial patron of Arianism, prayed St. Ambrose to draw out for him a defence of the Catholic faith, he accepted the charge indeed, and fulfilled it in his five books *De Fide;* but at the same time he declared that he would far more gladly exhort

to the faith, than go about to prove it by argument. When St. Augustine, the profound student and thinker, after sounding all the depths and shoals of philosophy, found in St. Ambrose the instrument under God of his conversion, it seems plain that it was not in the originality or profoundness of his teaching, but rather in his strong Christian personality, in the striking exhibition in him of the practical force of Christianity over the soul and over the world, in the dignity and self-sacrifice of his character, that the greater thinker, weary of abstract thought, found precisely that which he needed to convert him to a living faith.

But St. Ambrose was something more than a Christian orator. He was the precursor of the great Churchmen of the Middle Ages, as a true ecclesiastical statesman, in days, moreover, when it was more than ever impossible to draw a hard and fast line between the things of the State and the things of the Church. Of the three Emperors of the West, Gratian, Valentinian II., and Theodosius, he was the trusted and revered counsellor. Over the first two Emperors, who were but youths, he exercised much of the authority, as of the guiding love, of a father; towards their great successor he seems to have been what Nathan was to David—now a loyal servant and counsellor, now a guide and a rebuker with authority, in the name of the Lord. He served them, indeed, in the political sphere. More than once, in times of emergency, he became their ambassador to rivals

and usurpers of Empire, seeking above all things to secure peace. He took the lead, again, naturally in the sphere of social beneficence, not only in peace but even more in times of war. When crowds of Roman captives were sold as slaves by the barbarian conquerors, and when invasion of the Roman provinces spread ruin and misery and desolation, he was the chief agent in ransoming the slave and relieving the poor and starving. On one such occasion, which has become famous, he sold, for this purpose of true Christian charity, the sacramental vessels themselves; replying to remonstrance in the noble words, "If the blood of Christ redeemed their souls, should not the vessels which hold that blood be used to redeem their bodies?" The natural result was that over the minds and hearts of the people he wielded an unequalled and even formidable influence. They looked on him—rather than on the more secular counsellors of the Emperors, or even the Emperors themselves in their remote majesty,—as their true leader, a "Christian tribune of the people," as he has been not inappropriately called. In times of trial and danger and conflict with Imperial persecution, it was the popular enthusiasm which supported and protected him, and was hardly kept by his strenuous influence from violent resistance and rebellion. Something of that universal leadership, which in fuller measure devolved on the Papacy in the person of Gregory the Great, was anticipated two centuries earlier in the great Archbishop of Milan.

But yet all these forms of public service were absolutely subordinated to his definitely religious ministry. He was a statesman because he was a Churchman, a servant of man because he was a servant of God.

In his day, as I have said, the Catholic faith was beginning to gain the victory against the two great forces of antagonism. First, the conversion of the Empire, begun under Constantine, was to be completed under Theodosius. Next, the struggle with Arianism, begun at Nicæa, was to be closed at Constantinople. In both these aspects St. Ambrose showed himself a bold and unsparing champion of the Church's cause.

(4.) The conflict with the paganism, so deeply rooted in the whole Roman system, and, naturally enough, ruling in the old Rome of the West far more than in the new Rome of the East, had passed through much vicissitude. Under Constantine, the Empire accepted the religion of Christ as the coming religion, and gave it the fullest scope under Imperial patronage, but did not identify itself with Christianity, or actively discourage paganism. Under Constantius, the effect of more direct Imperial recognition of the Christian faith was marred by the resolute and vehement support of the Arian heresy, which was itself a half-pagan degradation of Christianity. The reaction under Julian to a transcendental Neo-Platonic religion, under old pagan rites and superstitions, not unnaturally followed; but it was an artificial and transitory reaction, and it died with its author. Then came a troubled time under Jovian and Valens and Valentinian, during which the

dominant force of Christianity gradually asserted itself. Gratian, himself an earnest Christian and disciple of St. Ambrose, was the first to refuse the title of *Pontifex Maximus*, which identified the Emperor with the old religion of Rome. The refusal was significant. Paganism now had to plead, not for supremacy, but for toleration, and often pleaded in vain. Finally, the great Theodosius took a decisive line of action, resolving to bring to an end the struggle, of which the issue was a foregone conclusion. He ordered the heathen temples to be closed. In many cases, as notably in the Serapeum at Alexandria, they and their idols were destroyed. He forbade the practice, at any rate the open practice, of heathen rites and divination and sacrifice, without, however, enforcing by persecution or by law any profession of Christianity or disavowal of heathenism. It was enough. Far severer measures of discouragement and repression had been taken against Christianity, but utterly in vain, because of its undying vitality. Against paganism the action of Theodosius was decisive, simply because it was but a slaying of what was already smitten with death.

In an interesting phase of this action St. Ambrose took a leading part. At a critical time in the history of the Empire, when in early manhood Gratian, the resolute champion of Christianity, had been defeated by Maximus, and treacherously murdered in Gaul, Symmachus, the Præfect of Rome, a man of the highest and noblest character, himself a pontiff and augur, addressed to the young Valentinian II. an eloquent

and even pathetic plea, first, for the restoration of the Altar of Victory at Rome, as hallowed by glorious historic memories, and as a centre of national unity, and, next, for the preservation of the endowments of the Vestal Virgins, as the guardians of the sacred fire of national life.[1] The plea is represented as uttered by Rome herself for her ancient religion, which repulsed Hannibal from her gates and the Gauls from the Capitol, which conquered the world and subjected it to her laws. It is for a religion which is by inheritance national, not universal. Every people has (it is urged) its presiding genius and its own time-honoured religion, by which it is guided through the darkness of the unknown. All cannot arrive by the same road at the central mystery. Even in Rome itself the plea is not for exclusive supremacy, but at most for priority, or even for toleration, side by side with the rising Christianity. For the Emperor it is prayed that he may receive blessing from the sacred protection of all sects alike. His father is represented as "looking down from the starry citadel of heaven," and beholding the tears of the oppressed priests, whom he had himself protected.

Very striking is the contrast in tone of the reply of St. Ambrose, as the confident representative of a victorious faith, which could not for a moment accept a mere co-ordination with the obsolete and decaying paganism, or acknowledge the difficulty of

[1] The original is preserved to us in the letters of St. Ambrose, with his own rejoinder (Ep. xvii.).

finding the one way to truth, when God's own voice had declared it. Rome, again, speaks through his lips also, but it is to confess herself to have been on a level with barbarians in the past in ignorance of the true God, and to feel it no shame now in her old age to learn a higher and a truer faith. The demand of Symmachus, he says, is an anachronism; it can come home only to some votary of the old superstition. "A Christian Emperor has learnt to honour only the altar of Christ." The plea of conscience, he continues, has a double edge. The pagan rite is an insult to the faith of the Christians; their conscience is more severely tried by the practice of pagan ceremonial in the name of the state, than that of pagans by its omission. If your religion, he cries, is true, let it grow as ours has grown, by wrongs, by poverty, by persecution. If your Vestal Virgins would serve their gods, let them offer, as Christian virgins have done, a gratuitous service. As to the plea for antiquity, it is simply a plea for barbarism and retrogression. As well might we return from the full-grown world to the chaos "without form and void." Faith in Christ is our new creation; it is our perfect harvest; it is the life and light of our souls.

It is not perhaps strange that the plea of Symmachus, made more than once, was rejected. At one moment, indeed, it did prevail for a short time under the usurpation of Eugenius and Arbogastes. The triumph of Theodosius swept it away for ever. It was, indeed, obviously a plea for much more than

toleration. It virtually asked an official sanction for a retrograde movement towards an effete religion. But had it been for toleration alone, it would not have been accepted. As to persecution in the strict sense, there was to be not the faintest approach to that which in days past paganism had inflicted on Christianity. But no one then—St. Ambrose least of all—dreamt of treating all religions as equal in the cognisance of the State, or of preserving forms of rite and worship which were dying or dead. They were to be buried by simple disuse, lest they should cumber and pollute the ground.

(5.) The other conflict, with the declining force of Arianism, was more obstinate and difficult, but its conclusion almost equally certain; for here also the battle of principle had already been fought and won. It had been a struggle of life and death. The iota of difference between the Homo-ousion and Homoi-ousion, at which Gibbon was once pleased to sneer, is seen, not merely by theologians, but by vigorous independent thinkers (such as Thomas Carlyle), to have been a world-wide difference—between the assertion and the evacuation of the central Christian mystery—between the claim of Christianity to be the absolute and universal religion of the Son of God, and the conception of it as but one out of many imperfect religions, taught by the greatest Son of Man. The conflict, at first apparently settled at Nicæa, was to convulse the whole Church for more than half a century. The rationalism of the Arian theory, in all

its various forms, naturally enlisted on its side all the forces of heathen religion and thought, and these were backed by Imperial power. Against them there was simply the force of Evangelical and Apostolic truth. In the person of Athanasius—so significantly named that I almost wonder why modern criticism has not sublimed him into a myth—the undying force of that truth prevailed. In the early days of the episcopate of St. Ambrose its victory had been sealed at the Council of Constantinople (A.D. 381).

But, conquered in the East in the battle of doctrine and faith, it was to linger still in a certain practical force in the West—now in the Empire, hereafter in its Gothic conquerors. Like paganism, it had ceased to claim supremacy; it sought simply for co-ordination, at any rate in the eye of the law, with the Catholic truth. Justina, the Empress, the mother and in great measure the ruler of the young Valentinian II., demanded at Milan one church at least for the worship of the Arian party—first the Tertian Basilica outside the walls, afterwards a new Basilica within, built by Ambrose himself as the Church of the Apostles—a Cross church, symbolic (as he describes it) of the victory of the Cross of Christ—standing, it would seem, nearly on the site of the great modern Cathedral. The demand was backed by the Imperial authority and by military force. St. Ambrose, as might have been expected, absolutely refused compliance. The Emperor might take, he said, his estate and his life, but God's temple could not be given up by His

priest. To the threat of the Court Chamberlain that he would take off his head, he contemptuously replied, "Be it so: I shall die as a bishop; you, as an eunuch, will do after your kind." He, on his part, at once occupied the Tertian Basilica with a peaceful garrison of himself and his people, worshipping God in praise and prayer. The Imperial officers surrounded it with troops, and put up the hangings, which marked it as an Imperial possession. They threw some prominent champions of the cause into prison. The young Emperor himself reproached the Archbishop with making himself a tyrant. Against all this St. Ambrose stood undaunted, supported by a popular enthusiasm, which he with difficulty restrained from violence and bloodshed.[1] The passive resistance, we are told, overawed the soldiers themselves. Finally the Court gave way, the hangings were removed, and the peaceful triumph was hailed with hymns of praise to God, as gained once for all.

Not yet indeed was the battle quite over. One Imperial edict authorized the assemblies for Arian worship under a rival bishop, Auxentius; another required St. Ambrose to appear and plead against his rival before judges chosen by the Emperor. How far the former was effective against the popular feeling we do not know. To the latter, Ambrose replied that it was an unheard-of thing that laymen should sit in judgment on a bishop, boldly appealing to a law of

[1] An Arian presbyter was roughly handled by the mob, and rescued by some presbyters and deacons sent by St. Ambrose (Ep. xx. 5).

Valentinian I., that "priests alone should judge priests." As for himself, he said, only before a Council of the Church would he plead. "I cannot, O Emperor, come to your consistory; I cannot plead there except for your rights. I cannot plead within the palace, for its secrets I neither care for nor know." Once more the Imperial soldiers were sent. Once more St. Ambrose and his people took refuge in the church, and sang to God his hymns, which his enemies declared to have bewitched the people. Once more the Court shrank from pushing matters to an extremity.

The course of these conflicts was marked by a striking episode. St. Ambrose was asked to consecrate a new church with the same ceremony as the great Basilica; he replied that he would do so, if relics of martyrs were found there. Excavation was made by his direction, and the remains of two bodies, identified as those of two martyrs, Protasius and Gervasius, who were said to have suffered under Nero, were discovered on its site. They were brought into the church with rejoicing and religious celebration; miracles (so St. Ambrose, St. Augustine, and others testify from eye-witness)[1] were wrought by touching

[1] St. Ambrose's own account is given, simply enough, in a letter to his sister Marcellina (Ep. xxii.); St. Augustine's, in his "Confessions" (ix. 7), and the *De Civitate Dei* (xxii. 8). Paulinus describes the discovery briefly, and names the blind man who was healed, as one Severus, who afterwards for many years was a servant in the Basilica (c. xiv.). The accounts vary in detail, *e.g.*, St. Augustine says that the spot was revealed to St. Ambrose by a vision, of which St. Ambrose himself says nothing, only speaking of a certain presentiment in his mind. But in the main points they agree.

them—a cure of blindness, and relief from lunacy and demoniacal possession. The discovery was celebrated by St. Ambrose in an extant hymn, and commemorated in an anniversary festival, on which we have an extant sermon of St. Augustine (Serm. 286). The story is a remarkable one; the facts of the discovery and the apparent miracles cannot well be doubted. The alternative is between belief in the substantial reality of the whole, with fair allowance for exaggeration and imagination, and the supposition, of course put forward at the time by the Arian party, of an imposture on the part of St. Ambrose, which is utterly alien from his whole life and character, or, of an imposture of others deceiving him, which is hardly compatible with his own record of the facts.[1] But—whatever we may judge as to the truth of this remarkable story—there is no doubt that at the time it was generally believed and accepted as a Divine interposition, and a witness of Divine favour to the unflinching champion of the Catholic faith. It contributed to assure and to hasten that defeat of the Arian contention, which probably would in any case have come.[2]

Of this action of St. Ambrose, as of his struggle against paganism, it may be said that it succeeded

[1] The whole record is simply one of the most striking instances of a class of stories which meets us again and again in Church history, in which we have to choose between the suppositions of imposture, delusion, and some measure at least of reality.

[2] The Basilica, dedicated to the two martyrs by St. Ambrose, is the ancient church, which now bears his name, under the altar of which his own body is said to rest.

where, had it been on the other side, it would undoubtedly have failed, simply because the force of the Arian movement had already spent itself in vain. It had passed from stage to stage, till it had finally gravitated to something like modern Socinianism; it was now seen by all to be what St. Athanasius had from the first declared it to be—a virtual surrender of the great central mystery of Christianity, and with this of its claim to universal and absolute allegiance from all humanity. The truth, by its own intrinsic power, had prevailed already; we should have left it to win freely, and without forcible intervention or denunciation, its complete victory. But in those times no man who was really in earnest ventured to rely with this confidence on its unassisted power. St. Ambrose simply represented his age, and carried public opinion and feeling with him, when he resisted with all his might the public teaching of heresy. He was not, be it remembered, ready to persecute. On one occasion, against the interest of the cause he had in hand, he refused all communion with the bishops at the court of Maximus, who had, in the case of Priscillian, shed for the first time the blood of heretics;[1] but he would have thought himself false to his Master, if he had permitted, when he could prevent it, the public denial of His true Godhead.

(6.) There was, however, unhappily one case, in which he went beyond this position, and, to our minds, most unjustifiably used his unrivalled influence with

[1] See Epp. xxiv. 12, xxvi. 2.

the great Theodosius to excuse, if not to justify, persecution. A Jewish synagogue had been burnt by some Christians in Mesopotamia at the instigation of their bishop. A chapel of Valentinian heretics had been destroyed by some monks. Theodosius, acting in strict justice as protector of all his subjects, ordered that the bishop should rebuild the synagogue, and that the turbulent monks should be duly punished. But St. Ambrose's zeal carried him on not only into intolerance, but into a dangerous condonation of violence. He wrote earnestly to the Emperor, praying him to revoke his orders.[1] In his eyes, the synagogue "was a seat of misbelief, a house of impiety, a refuge of madness, which God Himself had condemned;" the Valentinian conventicle no better than a heathen temple. To destroy such places was a venial error; to restore them a treason against God. Theodosius disregarded the appeal. Then St. Ambrose went further still, and actually brought his sacerdotal authority to bear upon the Emperor. Preaching shortly afterwards before him, he repeated and enforced his remonstrance, and at last, by declaring, that, till the order was revoked, he could not with a safe conscience offer the Eucharistic sacrifice for the Emperor, actually wrung from the reluctant Theodosius the revocation which had been so earnestly desired—a revocation which, while he conceded it, he must have felt to be wrong in principle; for he passed five years after a law against those who, under pretence of devotion, destroyed

[1] See Ep. xl.

and pillaged the synagogues of the Jews, who, if they were under the ban of the Church, were certainly under no proscription of the Empire.

It is an infinite relief to turn from this painful episode in the history to that higher aspect of St. Ambrose's relation to the Emperor, in which he stood up in really spiritual power, as the guardian of righteousness and mercy. It was the more difficult for him to make that stand, because it was against the great Theodosius, whom in most things—while he refused to act as a courtier, or to sacrifice to Imperial greatness what he held to be the privilege and dignity of the episcopate—he reverenced and loved.[1] Theodosius, with all his generosity and clemency, was liable to violent outbursts of passion against rebellion and wrong-doing. Once in the year 397, as we learn from the history of St. Chrysostom, he had threatened excessive severity against the turbulent city of Antioch, which had torn down and insulted the Imperial statues, in rebellion against heavy taxation. Then, by the intercession of Flavian the bishop, the chief rioters alone were punished, and the trembling city spared. Now, at Thessalonica, there had been a worse outrage—rebellion, and brutal murder of the Imperial Præfect and some of his officers. The wrath of Theodosius blazed out into an indiscriminate ven-

[1] "I loved him," he said in his funeral oration, "as a man, merciful and humble in his Imperial sway, of pure heart and gentle spirit, such as the Lord is wont to love. . . . I loved the man, who honoured a reprover more than a flatterer" (*De Obitu Theodosii*, 33, 34).

geance—a slaughter of the citizens by the soldiers, in which some 7000 fell. Ambrose had interceded for the city, but in vain; for a promise made to him of pardon to all except the murderers was revoked by advice of Rufinus. Now, overwhelmed with sorrow and horror, he wrote to Theodosius a letter,[1] in which —clearly not without much pain, and a deep sense at once of the dignity and the high character of one who was both his sovereign and his friend[2]—he rebukes a crime, which he brands as unparalleled in history, of which he had beforehand declared the atrocity, which Theodosius himself had condemned by too late seeking to revoke it. He implores the Emperor not to be ashamed to repent openly, that the Lord, who alone can do it, may take away his sin. "I persuade, I implore you," he adds, "I exhort, I admonish you. Till you have repented, I dare not offer the sacrifice, if you seek to approach the altar. Yet even now is the accepted time for repentance. Then you shall offer, when your sacrifice shall be accepted before the Lord." Nor were these mere words. In spite of them, Theodosius presented himself without public penitence, and was publicly rejected. To his plea, "David was guilty of murder and adultery," St. Ambrose returned the crushing reply, "You who

[1] See Ep. li. The letter is clearly written, under difficulty both of conflict of feeling and of anxiety, lest too harsh an assertion of authority should defeat itself.

[2] "The remembrance," he says, "of our old friendship is sweet to me, and I remember the graciousness of those benefits, which at my frequent intercessions thou hast conferred on others" (Ep. li. 1).

have imitated David in sin; imitate him in repentance."

Then followed that magnificent exhibition of the submission of the wielder of a gigantic temporal power —absolute, unequalled, almost deified—to the spiritual strength of justice and mercy, speaking in the name of God, appealing to the higher majesty of Christ. The Emperor laid aside his Imperial splendour;[1] he appeared as a humble penitent and suppliant for pardon before the eyes of his people, who, we are told, prayed and wept with him. He passed, it is said,[2] a law that no sentence of execution should be carried out for thirty days, so that no sudden burst of anger should stain the Empire again with innocent blood. Then, and not till then, was he restored to Christian communion.

It was characteristic of the nobleness of the man, that he loved and reverenced St. Ambrose more than ever up to the day of his death. "Happy," it was well said, "the Emperor who had such a priest; happy the priest who lived under such an Emperor." For once the true ideal of spiritual power was attained, and a lesson was read to the world which could never be forgotten. Had the ecclesiastical power been always thus exercised, had it never caught the spirit of the world, which it professed to rebuke, how wonderfully would the course of the history of Christendom

[1] See the *De Obitu Theodosii*, 34.

[2] This is said by Theodoret in his Life of St. Ambrose, c. 28. St. Ambrose, in his funeral oration, says nothing of it.

have been changed! How irresistibly would the cause of the Church have vindicated itself, as really the cause of God!

The later years of St. Ambrose's life were years of peace, and all but undisputed power for good. He saw, and rejoiced to see, the final steps taken by Theodosius for the extirpation of paganism. He witnessed, indeed, in 392, the defeat and murder of the young Valentinian II., over whom he mourned with all the tenderness of a spiritual father, and the temporary triumph of the heathenizing party under Arbogastes the Frank, and Eugenius, his puppet emperor. But he saw also the signal triumph of Theodosius at Aquileia, under circumstances of extreme difficulty and danger—with the aid of a sudden storm, which not Christians alone, but the heathen poet Claudian, attributed to Divine interposition—and his establishment till his death as absolute master of a now fully Christianized Roman Empire. It was significant of the spirit and character of his triumph, that the letter announcing it was laid not on a heathen altar of Victory, but as an Eucharistic offering before the Holy Table of the Lord.

Both emperor and bishop were soon to rest after their accomplished work. Theodosius died the very next year. We have St. Ambrose's funeral oration over him, written in high oratorical strain, but evidently out of a full heart, as over one who in his last moments cared not for himself but for the Church of God, and who had not lost his crown, but exchanged it for a better in the heavenly Jerusalem. "Grant," he cries,

"perfect rest to Thy servant, such rest as Thou hast prepared for thy saints." He reminds his hearers of the strong Christian faith, the humility, the readiness to acknowledge and repent of sin, the unwearied service, the sincere piety of their lost emperor. "May his soul pass to the region where he may no more feel the sting of death, and may he know that death is the end, not of being, but of sin! . . . His Imperial city looked for his return in triumphal splendour as the ruler of the whole earth. But he returns now greater, and more glorious, more illustrious than an earthly conqueror, surrounded not by his soldiers, but by the angelic hosts; not to his Imperial city here, but to the heavenly city above."

In two years St. Ambrose followed him to the same eternal rest. He was but fifty-seven years old, but he had worn himself out in the struggles, the anxieties, the sufferings of a critical time. Up to the last, with powers quietly and gradually failing, he was able to continue his work of ruling and of teaching. To a call to pray for longer life in that service, his answer was, "I have not so lived as to be ashamed to live longer; we have a good Master, and I fear not to die." To a brother bishop, who watched over him, there came, he said, a voice, saying, "Rise quickly; he is ready to depart." Ambrose received the Holy Communion at his hand, and then quietly fell asleep. Like St. Paul, he "had finished his course." In spite of all imperfections and errors, he had certainly "fought the good fight," and most earnestly had he "kept the faith."

(7.) His character is not only written plainly on his life, but is disclosed to us also in the remarkable series of letters, private and public, which have come down to us. He was, as has been said, beyond all else a great ruler of the Church of God; in his own nature strong, clear-sighted, fearless, masterful, with the ascendency over the minds and wills of others, characteristic of those who know human nature well, who can direct all the forces that govern that nature to one foreseen end, and who have that sympathy, which can at once enter into all the feelings of ordinary men, and yet draw them up to a higher level of thought and aspiration. It would be hard to say that in him that frankly dominant spirit never exaggerated itself into what we rightly call imperiousness, with its characteristics of harshness and pride. But any tendency in this direction was tempered in him by two counteracting influences.

In some sense, by a vein of affectionate and tender feeling. His character lives to us as a strongly human character, differing in this respect from those of some of his great contemporaries, who had had a more rigidly ecclesiastical training, and who had been more thoroughly carried away by the strong current then setting in towards monastic separation from the world and its sympathies. That St. Ambrose felt something of its influence is indeed clear from his series of works on "Virginity," its glory and its obligations. But it was not in him a primary idea, a predominant enthusiasm, as we see it in the life and works of his great

contemporary, St. Jerome. No one can read his letters to his sister Marcellina, his funeral oration over his beloved brother Satyrus, or over the young Valentinian II., without seeing that the ties of natural affection in him were living and strong, and that, in the right sense of the word, he was a man of this world, as well as that which is to come.

But the true overmastering force was the higher consciousness, which attaches always to the Christian Ministry—the sense at once of high mission and personal unworthiness—the absorption of mere individuality in the great institution, ordained and blessed by God, for the salvation of humanity in this world and in the next. That consciousness might hurry him in its zeal, as we have seen, beyond the bounds of justice and consideration for others; but it at any rate always makes a man sink himself, and bids him feel power to be not a possession, but a trust and a responsibility.

He was a great actor more truly than a great writer; accordingly, he served mainly his own age. His words, except in a few pregnant sayings and a few glorious hymns, have not spoken to the ages to come. But at the time they were singularly effective, and that in a great variety of application; and they were marked by considerable literary and oratorical gifts, not without some touch of poetry. He has left us, first, a long series of comments on Holy Scripture, mainly in spirit homiletical, and in style copious and oratorical; often touched with the fire of imagination; full of the concep-

tion of mystical and typical representation of Christian truth, in the ancient book of the Scriptures, and even in the book of Nature.[1] In the Old Testament, beginning with the Hexaemeron, the story of creation, we find comments and teaching on all the history, from Paradise and the Patriarchal record of Noah, of Abraham, of Isaac, of Jacob and Joseph, onwards to David and Elijah; then comments on the Book of Job, and elaborate discourses on the Psalms; in the New Testament ten whole books on the Gospel according to St. Luke. Next on works properly theological and ecclesiastical, the five books *De Fide*, and treatises on the Incarnation and the Holy Spirit, all dealing with the questions raised in the great Arian controversy; then works on the Ministry of the Church, the Sacramental Mysteries, the Absolution of the Penitent, the Vocation and Glory of Virginity, all bearing on that building up of ecclesiastical power, which was the main work of his life. Thirdly, the two books of Epistles, some really letters, others rather ecclesiastical papers and dissertations of infinite interest, bringing out vividly his own character and life, and all the history of his time. And with these we may class those funeral orations of which I have spoken, and in which the whole man pours himself out. Last, not least, his famous hymns. We cannot indeed ascribe to him the glorious *Te Deum*,

[1] See an interesting sketch of the writings of St. Ambrose in Wordsworth's "Church History" (vol. iii. c. 3). "St. Ambrose," he says, "may be said to have done for Latin theology what Cicero did for Latin philosophy—he enriched it from the stores of Greek literature."

the "hymn of St. Ambrose," or "of St. Ambrose and St. Augustine," as it was once called. But such hymns as the *Æterne Rerum Conditor*, the *Veni Creator Gentium*, and the *Splendor Paternæ Gloriæ*, stand, not only in time but in excellence, in the very forefront of the ancient Church hymnody. What a living power they exercised at the time—bewitching, so his enemies cried out, the minds and hearts of the people by a magic spell—fusing, so to speak, the meditation on deep Christian truth in the glow of a devotional enthusiasm—animating the soul of resistance of Christian duty and vocation, against pagan or heretical enmity, backed by Imperial power—all this the history tells. Perhaps more striking still the testimony of St. Augustine: "How did I weep in Thy hymns and canticles? The voices flowed into my ears, the truth sank into my heart, whence the affection of devotion overflowed, and the tears ran down."

They were connected, as we see here, with the introduction from the East of that "Ambrosian music," of which the Gregorian has been the lineal descendant. Simple it must have been in the extreme, according to our modern ideas. How far it was more than musical recitation—how far it included what we should call melody—our authorities differ. But it clearly marked an epoch in the worship of the Western Church. Music before it there must of course have been. When was there popular worship without it? But now for the first time it was recognised as a real spiritual power, telling through the imagination, as music so strongly tells, on

the mind and heart, for broad simple teaching to the one, for devotional enthusiasm in the other.

In the variety and exuberant fulness of these works —not indeed profound in originality of theological thought or fulness of learning—not having the depth of spiritual power and insight, which breathes in every utterance of St. Augustine—but always strong in a grave or enthusiastic earnestness, always marked by vigour and freshness, often by a stately eloquence, and by much felicity, even epigrammatical felicity of expression—we clearly trace a many-sided man, having large variety of taste and sympathy; we can easily understand the almost universal influence, which he exercised, not only over the people, but over men of high station and culture and thought.

In respect to that great practical work to which he devoted his life, he was certainly under God an instrument of great good. He has been, as we have seen, called the founder of Western sacerdotal power, and not untruly so called. But his ideal clearly was of an order of civilized society which should be at once a Holy Catholic Church and a Holy Roman Empire; in which the ecclesiastical and civil powers should work in harmony—the Christian Ministry, as culminating in the episcopate, and ruling by spiritual force, in the one —the Emperor, as a servant of God ruling by the sword, in the other. It is an ideal hard at all times perfectly to realize; for a unity of two absolutely co-ordinate powers is impossible. One must take the lead: on the ecclesiastical theory the Church, on what is commonly called

the Erastian theory the State. But under St. Ambrose and Theodosius it was to some degree realized for a time, and even such imperfect realization was a great power for good. In the succeeding centuries the Empire became overwhelmingly dominant in the East; in the West the fall of the Empire, and the disorganisation brought on by the victory of the barbarians, left the Church, ruled by the growing power of the Papacy, to assume of necessity a large responsibility of temporal as well as spiritual supremacy, till the revival in Charles the Great of the Empire of the West. For that contingency St. Ambrose's consolidation of ecclesiastical power was a Providential preparation. It is hard to see how otherwise society could have been carried through the crises of disorder and revolution—how moral and social order could have been saved, and the barbarian races brought into the Church, to form a new Christendom—how the European civilisation, which was to rule the world, could have been from the first strongly stamped with the impress of Christianity.

The time, as we know, was to come, when that ecclesiastical power would become a despotism, with all the evils of despotism aggravated by the claim of a spiritual character; when it was to degrade and falsify that claim by use of the evil forces of superstition and violence, and by pursuit of the worldly objects which it professed to despise; when, in the endeavour to crush rising freedom and to quench the growth of intellectual light, it would provoke a reaction, in itself indeed most

needful and beneficent, but yet breaking up Church unity, and leaving behind it evils and difficulties which we feel still. But all this St. Ambrose could not have foreseen. He simply, like other saints, "served his own generation by the will of God," before he "fell asleep." His service was a great one, and it was greatly done. Whatever its defects and its errors may have been, we can see that it was wrought by the Divine Providence into the great progress of His dispensation, and the advance over the world of the kingdom of Christ.

The Church in the Catacombs.

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THE CHURCH IN THE CATACOMBS.

Definition and examples of Catacombs.—What is a *Catacomb?*[1] The word ought not to be strange to the ears of English people, who are familiar with the hollows so frequent under the name Combes

[1] The best general introduction in English to a study of the Catacombs will be found in Mr. (now Dr.) W. H. Withrow's, "The Catacombs of Rome, and their Testimony relative to Primitive Christianity" (Hodder & Stoughton, 1878). Dr. Withrow belongs to the Methodist Episcopal Church of America. The book is so good, as a whole, that it seems invidious to warn the reader of a tendency in it to indulge in superlatives, where a positive degree would be better. It is not quite up to the date of the title-page. Perhaps it does not allow sufficiently for the inconsistency of some of the epitaphs, &c.

The *Roma Sotterranea* of Dr. Northcote and Canon Brounlow (Part 1, 1869; Part 2, 1879, Longmans) is an extremely useful compilation, and gives an excellent résumé of the subject, with coloured plates, appendices, &c., from a Roman Catholic standpoint. Dr. Northcote has published a very useful collection of "Epitaphs of the Catacombs, or Christian Inscriptions in Rome during the First Four Centuries" (Longmans, 1878). See too the same writer's "Visit to the Roman Catacombs" (Burns & Oates). Mr. J. H. Parker's "Catacombs of Rome" is useful for the early art of the Catacombs, but his conclusions as to date differ from those of other writers. A useful discussion on the difficult question of the date of the paintings will be found in two articles in the *Revue Archéologique* for 1880, by M. Lefort. All these works depend on the investigations of Commendatore G. B. de' Rossi. Their result to the year 1874 is described in his

in the western part of England. *Catacomb*[1] is a Grecised form of that word, and means a place hollowed or scooped out. In the Middle Ages it was applied to a particular spot outside Rome, the ancient subterranean cemetery of St. Sebastian; and in later days it became the usual name for all similar subterranean places of burial, just as the name "academy" was transferred from its original local application to any place of scholastic instruction. And so, to-day, there are catacombs not only at Rome, but in Naples, Malta, Sicily, Paris, and even in London; but those at Rome, as they are widest in extent, so are they chief in interest, and will always claim the attention of Christian people.

Visit to a representative Catacomb.—Now let us imagine a visit to the Roman Catacombs. The special instance usually selected is the Catacomb of

Roma Sotterranea, and his *Inscriptiones Christianæ septimo sæculo Antiquiores*. These great works have been practically brought up to date by the various numbers of the *Bullettino di Archeologia Cristiana*, which was superintended by De' Rossi until the time of his death in 1894. In the British Museum and some other first-rate libraries the reader may consult the magnificent *Les Catacombes de Rome*, of Louis Perret, in which truly monumental work appear the most gorgeous reproductions (often restorations) of the frescoes in the Catacombs. The book costs more than £100. The best monograph on the whole subject, from a Church History point of view, will be found in M. Théophile Roller's *Les Catacombes de Rome*, two grand volumes, on which the author was at work for years. They contain description, plates, discussion, patristic elucidations, &c., and conclude with useful summaries concerning the chronology, art, and dogma of the Catacombs.

[1] The word is discussed by the late Precentor Venables in the "Dictionary of Christian Antiquities," i. 295; and see *Bull. di Archeol. Crist.* Ser. iv. 4, pp. 30, 31.

St. Callistus. A drive of nearly three miles brings you past places renowned in story—past the walls of the city, past the Church of *Domine quo Vadis*, past the tombs of the Scipios, until, as you speed along the Appian Way, that queen of roads, by which St. Paul entered Rome, you reach at last a doorway in a wall.[1] Admission being gained, a Trappist monk, the *custode* of the place, supplies you with wax tapers, and you descend an ancient staircase into a series of galleries which open now and then into little chapels or chambers. These galleries are as a rule about a yard wide and seven or eight feet high, more or less, according to circumstances. They are cut out in the *tufa*, which is a kind of solid earth, scarcely stone, but much firmer than clay, an admirable material in which to cut tunnels. The galleries so formed cross and recross one another with the method and regularity of the streets in a well-planned town, and are found as a rule in several stories, communication between each level being effected by flights of steps.

As you follow your guide along these warm and yet sufficiently airy corridors, you notice on either side little cupboards, as it were, resembling the berths in the cabin of a ship. Some are open and empty, some are broken, a few are closed; and here and there you discover names chiselled rudely, and curious symbols

[1] Such a visit is described in Dr. Northcote's "Visit to the Roman Catacombs." Or see A. J. C. Hare's "Walks in Rome," i. 400. The index at the end, under "Catacombs," will give information about other Catacombs. Murray's or Baedeker's "Guides to Rome" will give practical descriptions. The former is quite up to date.

and devices; whilst in the little chapels into which the galleries are constantly opening out, there are frescoes and more pretentious tombs, and ornamentation which is readily seen to be far more elaborate than the primitive and simple designs in the galleries without; and names are seen upon the graves which are familiar enough to every student of early Church history.

The number and extent of the Roman Catacombs.—Now this cemetery, or Catacomb of St. Callistus, is perhaps the most remarkable and interesting of the Catacombs, but it is only one of a great many of these early burial-places. Fourteen ancient roads lead from the gates of Rome in various directions, and on all[1] of them have catacombs been discovered. There may yet be others to disinter, but already we know of fifty-four. So vast are the involutions of these underground labyrinths, that, it has been estimated, 400 miles would represent their entire length, if it were possible to disentangle their intricate windings. Many of them have been fully explored and mapped and illustrated, but some are practically unknown, and there are still possibilities of discovery before the Roman Archæological Commission, which has done so much to illustrate these gloomy passages.

Four periods of their history.—All this exploration and description of the Roman Catacombs is merely the latest stage in a long history which is as old as the Christian centuries, could we trace it back to its

[1] See the list in "Dictionary of Christian Antiquities," i. 315, which is taken from De' Rossi. It is not, however, quite up to date.

commencement. We may divide that history into four unequal periods. The last 300 years may be called the period of recovery; then before that there are 700 years of practical oblivion; before that there are 500 years of pillage and ruin; and it is only when we surmount the fifteen centuries, so accounted for, that we reach at last the lower end of the period of their use. It may make the subject clearer, and more interesting as well, if we rapidly look backwards over these intervening centuries, and so get some idea of their history as a whole, before we examine its early years more in detail.

The period of recovery.—It was on the last day of May, in the year 1578,[1] that some workmen who were digging outside Rome suddenly broke through into the gallery of an ancient Catacomb, where they found to their surprise paintings, inscriptions, and sculptured coffins. That chance blow of a spade first revealed to Rome of the sixteenth century the almost unsuspected existence of an ancient Rome beneath itself, an ancient Christian Rome, a city of the dead; for at that time scarce a Catacomb was known or visited, and the very tradition of those which subsequent discovery has brought to light had then died out. Great interest was excited by the discovery, and during the three centuries which have passed since then, "Roma Sotterranea" has exercised an intense fascination upon the minds of a long series

[1] See the story told in Northcote, *Roma Sotterranea*, i. 1. Cf. Withrow, "The Roman Catacombs," p. 150.

of famous scholars and explorers. The potency of that fascination may be illustrated by the story of one discoverer who came to Rome in order to study the subject for six months, and stayed there for fifty years of active investigation. The list of these learned men is a long one,[1] and their earnest toil demands a passing recognition, for we have really entered into their labours to a greater extent than modern research is perhaps inclined to admit. The first name is Bosio, who died in 1627. He was followed in his own century by Aringhi, and at intervals, during the eighteenth century, by Fabretti, Boldetti, Bottari, to whom there succeeded in our own century, Raoul Rochette, Marchi, and last but greatest of all, Giovanne Battista de' Rossi, who passed away from us only last year. This great Italian scholar De' Rossi devoted his time, and talents, and means, for fifty years, to the work of examination. It was he, I believe, who persuaded the last Pope, Pio Nono, to inaugurate a Commission of Sacred Archæology, in 1851, which should regulate and carry out investigation of the Catacombs, making the results of its work accessible to the world. It is to De' Rossi's great works, *Roma Sotterranea* and *Inscriptiones Christianæ*, that we are now chiefly indebted for our knowledge of one of the most attractive departments of Archæology, a study which in this case not only increases our knowledge,

[1] See the list in Withrow, cap. iv. The *Bull. di Archeol. Crist.* for 1894 contains a pathetic notice of the death of the Commendatore G. B. de' Rossi, the last and greatest of the series.

but confirms our faith. When De' Rossi began his work, two centuries and more had only rewarded the searches with the discovery of a few monuments of first-rate historical importance; but the last fifty years have been rich in results, and a considerable number of objects have been brought to light which are exceedingly valuable, not only to the artist, but also to the historian. And so it comes to pass, looking back over this latest period in the history of the Roman Catacombs, that a vast number of inscriptions, of paintings, of symbols, of buildings, have been found in these subterranean galleries, and have been described by the discoverers or by visitors to Rome. Many of these objects remain where they were first found; many which, unluckily, were brought to light before investigation was regulated, have been carried away as relics, or given away as presents, or have been built into the walls and pavements of Roman churches; many have been taken by skilled hands to the Lapidarian Gallery in the Vatican, or more recently to the gallery in the Lateran Palace, arranged by De' Rossi in 1887, where they are easily accessible to all who wish to study such monuments of the past.

The period of oblivion, A.D. 850–1578.—And now having told you in rough outline something of the way in which exploration has, during the last 300 years, possessed us of many very interesting materials for the study of early Christian Rome, let us briefly glance at the two periods which intervene between this latest stage of Catacomb history, and the early

period of their use. Of that long tract of time which I called the period of oblivion, it must be enough to say that from the middle of the ninth century, until the workmen almost tumbled into the cemetery discovered in 1578—through all these seven centuries the Catacombs of Rome were practically forgotten. Just a few were known where they were connected with some monastery, or where a hidden crypt became a den of thieves, or a refuge in time of invasion and bloodshed; in fact, the one Catacomb which was visited during the late Middle Ages, that of St. Sebastian, the Catacomb *par excellence*, cannot compare in point of interest with others which have been brought to light in our own day.

The period of pillage and ruin.—And so we may pass back from this long extent of years, a period which in our own history extends back from the days of Queen Elizabeth to the reign of King Alfred in the ninth century; and there, as we come in view of the epoch which precedes it, we get the explanation of this strange forgetfulness. I have called it the period of pillage and ruin. It is introduced by an event so distant from our own time that we forget what an earthquake shock it seemed to the Christians of Rome in the fifth century. I refer to the Gothic invasions, which remodelled the map of Europe, and battered down the gates of Rome itself. Five times twice over in the fifth and sixth centuries did Rome endure a siege; and after the earlier days, when the Goths had respected the graves of the saints,

these relentless conquerors pillaged the shrines of martyrs, and carried away the booty of silver and gold and other costly offerings with which the Romans thought to do honour to the dead. It was in vain that, during the intervals of peace, Pope after Pope strove to repair the rifled tombs and to restore what had been carried away; for after the Goths came the Lombards, who carried away dead bodies, relics, and more precious objects than these, to their new home in Northern Italy. It was this continuous spoliation which induced successive Pontiffs to translate the bodies and remains of the dead, and to give them burial in the numerous churches within the walls of the city. We hear of the removal of many thousands of bodies, effected in this way; and thus, during the eighth and ninth centuries, a considerable number of graves were opened and cleared in the more frequented cemeteries, whilst other catacombs were doubtless blocked up and closed, never again to be visited until, in some cases, our own days.

The period of use to about A.D. 400.—Having now surmounted these 1200 years of pillage and oblivion, we reach at last the end of the fourth century—the age of Jerome and Ambrose in the Western Church, of Basil and the two Gregories in the East, and are thus introduced to the period during which the Catacombs were used. Jerome, writing about the year 410, has told us, in his Commentary on Ezekiel, of the visits which he used to pay as a boy, on

Sundays, to the Catacombs.[1] He is illustrating the mysterious chambers of the Temple, which the prophet saw in vision, as described in the fortieth chapter, and he likens their obscurity to the gloom of the crypts, where only here and there does a ray of light illumine the dense darkness. We see from his words that already, in the middle of the fourth century, it was a customary thing to visit the tombs of those whom he calls apostles and martyrs. Now the age of Jerome's boyhood was a troubled time theologically, the Church being rent with the momentous Arian controversy, but in other ways it was a sunny time for the Christians. The old days of persecution had passed away, and the Church of Christ was enjoying, with doubtful benefit, the favour and patronage of the Emperors who followed Constantine. And so, in days when there were none to check such devotion, it became more and more the fashion to venerate the martyrs and others who lay in the narrow sepulchres of the Catacombs, to adorn their places of burial, to commemorate them, and to build handsome churches over the spot. Damasus, the friend and patron of Jerome, who was Pope from A.D. 366 to 384, was chiefly conspicuous for the time and wealth which he spent in identifying and preserving the resting-places of famous people who had been buried in earlier days. We remember him chiefly for the debt which the Western Church owes him for inducing and enabling Jerome to undertake the revision

[1] The reference is *Hieron. in Ezech. Comment.* cap. xl. The substance of the passage and a translation are given in Withrow, p. 36.

of the Latin Bible which we call the Vulgate; but he was far more famous in his own and the next century as the Pope who restored the Catacombs, and made them accessible to the numerous pilgrims who came to visit them. His work is visible to-day, and not least important are the inscriptions which he set up, exquisitely engraved on marble, and destined to prove in our own day a useful guide to the identification of many parts of the Catacombs.

Three points of inquiry about the period of use.— It is, then, with the period which ends with the restoration of the Catacombs that we are more directly concerned to-day, when we speak of the Church in the Catacombs. Three points of inquiry suggest themselves about the Catacombs in those days: their origin in the light of modern research; their illustration of the history of the Church; and, lastly, their testimony to Christian belief and practice.

(1.) *The origin of the Catacombs.*—The origin of the Catacombs was simply and solely the necessity of burial.[1] We should expect that the Roman Christians would bury their dead, for not only was burial usual under the Empire to a greater extent than is often supposed, but we remember the ancient clause in our Creed which tells how our Lord was "buried." It is at least noteworthy that our first trace of this clause in the Apostles' Creed connects the word with Rome; at all events burial, whether influenced by this or

[1] For the general subject of this section, see Withrow's condensation of De' Rossi, cap. ii.

not, became the usual form of Christian sepulture at Rome. All burial was carefully regulated by Roman law. The site, for instance, was regarded as sacred and inviolable, whilst even the bodies of criminals were given to the surviving relatives, so that during the early years of Christianity at Rome a Christian tomb had a security which was often denied to the living person. In the next place, all burial was to take place outside the walls of the city for sanitary reasons; and this enactment it was which for pagan, for Jew, and for Christian, but chiefly for the last, inaugurated and maintained the practice of entombment along the route of the great consular roads which radiate from Rome. There was no reason at all in any principle why the Catacomb arrangement should be adopted, with its several stories of galleries cut out with almost mathematical precision. In Northern Africa, as we know, the cemeteries were arranged much in our own style; but at Rome the means of the Christians, and the exigencies of the soil, necessitated the system which I have already described. The land which skirted the roads either belonged to some family of position, or else was purchasable from an owner who was ready enough to part with ground which was not particularly productive. In the case of the Christians, the probable method of procedure was somewhat as follows: a burial site was obtained, perhaps by a family or by an individual, with a certain frontage upon the high-road, and a well-defined limit extending so many feet back. Here, at the first, the individual, or certain members of

a family, were laid to rest in a vault excavated at a depth of some feet below the surface. Over the site of burial there would be from very early times a *cella memoriæ*, as in the case of pagan tombs, where the relatives and friends would meet together to commemorate their dead friend. But by degrees the one gallery excavated became too small for those who obtained right of burial by relationship, or in virtue of a common religion; and so galleries were run at right angles, and, when the limits of the property were reached, steps would be built downwards, and a fresh story would be made below the original area. Meanwhile the Christians at Rome almost certainly availed themselves of a well-known Roman institution. It appears that the Romans had guilds or clubs in which the members co-operated for some common object of trade, of benefit, or of pleasure. Thus there were companies of masons, or carpenters, or boatmen, or scribes, just as we had our guilds in the Middle Ages in England. These *collegia* had their own internal laws, which were duly respected by the state; whilst their existence was carefully protected by law. Now amongst them there were burial clubs, whose members paid a regular contribution, and were buried after death in the ground which belonged to the company, and which was preserved inviolably, according to the Roman law protecting such institutions. We have the authority of an early writer, supported by more recent discovery, for the belief that the early Christians availed themselves of this legally recognised system in other places;

and we can scarcely be wrong in concluding that the practice was adopted by the Roman Christians, and it explains the origin of not a few Catacombs. The pagans, with the exception of some of the greater families, were not so particular about burial as were the Christians; but the Christians, clinging to a practice which had such hallowed associations, would be eager to make use of this legalised institution, and so would form funeral *collegia* to provide for the burial of the dead members of the Christian society belonging to some particular part of the city. In process of time the original area would prove too small, and would be extended by lower stories; and sometimes neighbouring areas appear to have been united, so as to form one large cemetery. The Catacombs so formed were probably at first known by the name of the guild which owned them; but when some eminent person was laid to rest, his or her name naturally became associated with the spot, and superseded the old designation; more especially was that the case when this famous person had died a martyr's death. Elsewhere the situation suggested the title, or else the name of the original owner or that of the custodian, when such an officer came into being. Probably in every case a small chapel was built over the entrance to the Catacomb, for the purpose already mentioned of commemorating the dead, and receiving the Holy Communion; and this, as we shall see, gave way to a series of ecclesiastical buildings when it was safe to erect them.

(2.) *The reflection of Roman Church history in the*

Catacombs.—Such then, generally speaking, is the origin of the Roman Catacombs. In the next place we have to see how they reflect the history of the Christians at Rome in other respects than the circumstances of burial. Unfortunately we cannot trace this history right back to the days when it certainly began, the days of the first general persecution. Tacitus tells us,[1] in his precise epigrammatic style, of the "vast multitude" whom Nero hounded to death, in order to divert the odium of the people from himself. His gardens, one of the chief scenes of the terror, were on the slopes of the Vatican, and it can scarcely be doubted that many a disfigured corpse was begged by the friends of the martyred one, in order to be buried in peace.

(*a.*) *The first century.*—And where would the burial take place? We know that ancient tradition speaks of the Vatican as the resting-place of the earliest bishops of Rome, coupled with the name of St. Peter, though, be it added, that tradition does not speak of him as *bishop*. Amongst these bishops is the name of Linus, and it is noteworthy, if not entirely convincing, that De' Rossi considers the sepulchre of Linus to have been discovered in the early seventeenth century;[2] certainly a stone was found bearing his name in the crypts of the Vatican which long ago were disturbed in order to make room for the Church of St. Peter. The earliest dated Christian inscrip-

[1] Tacitus, *Annal.* xv. 44.

[2] *Bull. di Archeol. Crist.*, 1864, p. 50. See in review, Northcote, *Roma Sotterranea*, i. 64.

tion takes us back to a few years later than the Neronian persecution, but it gives us no particulars at all beyond the name.[1] There are, however, at least three Catacombs which are supposed to date to this same first century—St. Priscilla, St. Lucina, and Domitilla. We can scarcely suppose that the Catacomb of St. Priscilla is really connected with Aquila's Priscilla, though this is not impossible, as, in Rom. xvi. 3, she is apparently living in Rome, but in any case the arrangement and contents of this Catacomb are undeniably ancient. A very problematical identification makes Lucina to have been the Pomponia Græcina, wife of Plautius, one of the Roman generals in Britain, who appears to have been a convert to Christianity about the time that St. Paul wrote his Epistle to the Romans. Domitilla has a very interesting connection. Her name brings us to the last years of the century, when Domitian was Emperor, styled by Tertullian "a bit of Nero for cruelty." Domitilla, who bore a name common to other members of the Imperial Family, was grand-daughter to Vespasian, probably niece of the reigning Emperor Domitian, and wife of Flavius Clemens the Consul.[2] Her husband, also closely related to royalty, was regarded by many people as very likely to follow Domitian upon the throne, but his prospects were cut short by death,

[1] It is given, of course, in De' Rossi's *Inscript. Christ.* See, too, Northcote's "Epitaphs," p. 29.

[2] The best discussion about Domitilla will be found in Bishop Lightfoot's "Apostolic Fathers," Part i., "Clement of Rome," i. 35, &c.

which was inflicted upon him for what was called atheism. There can be little doubt that this so-called atheism is merely the historian's name for Christianity. If so, we are face to face with a fact of considerable and almost startling importance, that before the first century ran out, one of royal blood and consular rank was a Christian; and if he, in this exalted position, had the courage to become so, why may not many others of good social status have confessed Christ in those same early times? That his wife was a Christian is now generally conceded, and the patient investigations of De' Rossi have succeeded in identifying the so-called Catacomb of Domitilla with an ancient plot of ground which belonged to her. Inscriptions have been found proving that she granted right of burial to other Christians, on this property, where, no doubt, she herself was afterwards buried.[1] Thus we obtain not only a very interesting identification, but we are introduced to a practice highly characteristic of the communism of early Christianity, which allowed burial within private property to other Christians of humbler rank, a practice which we otherwise know to have existed.

(*b.*) *The second century.*—The connecting links between the Catacombs and the Roman Church of the second century are disappointingly few. We know from other sources that the Emperor Trajan repressed the policy begun by Nero, whereby the very name of Christian was in itself a crime,

[1] See Lightfoot's "St. Clement," as before, i. pp. 35, 39, 51.

rendering the person who professed it liable to death.[1] Trajan's milder policy, which endured, on the whole, during the first half of the century, was ignored or deliberately changed by Marcus Aurelius. That reign brought savage persecution upon the Roman Church, and is in many ways a turning-point in the history of that Church, which now emerges from its early more Greek than Latin condition, and begins to possess a more definite history of its own. But there is little reflection of this chequered period in the epitaphs and other remains of the Catacombs. We have at least two dated inscriptions, which convey small information, to which we may probably add as coeval others which are undated, and certain pictures and buildings whose exact age is disputed. But, so far as I know, there is little or nothing of personal interest, save two identifications of martyrs' tombs which very probably belong to the reign of Marcus Aurelius. A great deal of legend surrounds the death of these two, St. Januarius and St. Cæcilia; but it is most likely that they belong to the time named, and there is no reason to question the identification of their tombs—the one in St. Prætextatus, the other in St. Callistus.

(*c.*) *The third century.*—When, however, we reach the third century, the case is different. There are a fair number of valid inscriptions here, and many others are referred to the same time, whilst build-

[1] For the nature of the early Imperial policy, see W. M. Ramsay's "Church in the Roman Empire," p. 242, &c.

ings and pictures of this date begin to multiply. Some of De' Rossi's most gratifying discoveries belong to the third century.[1] In the Crypt of St. Callistus, now called the Papal Crypt, he found the tombstones of five of the eleven third-century Popes known to have been buried there. Callistus himself was Pope at the beginning of that century, and is recorded to have been appointed guardian of the cemetery now bearing his name, and at that time probably the chief Catacomb in use. Another Catacomb recently recovered is connected with St. Hippolytus, whose writings, for many ages attributed to Origen, have now been referred to their real author, and shed a flood of light upon the Roman Church of that time. But within a generation or so of Callistus and Hippolytus there came the great Decian persecution, a determined attempt to uproot and destroy Christianity. It fell with frightful ferocity upon the Church in Rome, with disastrous results. The succeeding Emperor, Valerian, pursued the same policy.[2] The Catacombs bear pathetic evidence to this awful time. In earlier days the Christians had been safe in the Catacombs, but now at last it was discovered, apparently, that these subterranean vaults and chapels were used for refuge and for mutual comfort, and therefore, in A.D. 257, Valerian forbade the cemeteries to be entered, or Christian assemblies to take place there. It is supposed that

[1] See De' Rossi, *Roma Sotterranea*, ii. 367, &c.

[2] See contemporary accounts in St. Cyprian, Ep. 72, and Dionysius in Eusebius, vii. 10, 11.

the many "obstructed passages, masked entrances, devious windings, and devices for concealment or escape," which are observed in the Catacombs, are to be referred to those days when the ancient protection of the law was withdrawn from Christian cemeteries.

(*d.*) *The fourth century.*—But happier days came. Forty years of comparative peace succeeded these tempestuous times; and when they were past, the final, and worst of all the persecutions, broke upon the Church. Under Diocletian the Catacombs were once more confiscated, and very many Christians in Rome suffered martyrdom, and two of them, Marcus and Marcellinus, have given their names to existing Catacombs. But the time of deliverance was at hand, and with the victories of Constantine over his rivals, there came relief to the persecuted Church, which now set itself to beautify and adorn the tombs of those who had fallen victims to the savagery of the persecutors. Basilicas rose over every site of interest; the tombs of earlier martyrs were identified, and, as we have seen, Pope Damasus came forward, rather later, to carry on this work of restoration and preservation.

(3.) *The testimony of the Catacombs to doctrine and practice.*—Turning now to the evidential value of the Catacombs, we find ample material for forming pretty definite conclusions respecting the faith and practice, and, to some extent, as regards the organisation of the Church in Rome. This material consists of more than 6000 inscriptions, a vast number of

symbols, and very many pictures and representations. The only difficulty in dealing with all this mass of evidence is the question upon which experts differ considerably, namely, the exact age of the paintings. Many of these, which De' Rossi dates to the second and third centuries, are brought down by an English antiquary, Parker, to a very much later date, when Roman belief had somewhat changed.

(*a.*) *General character of the inscriptions.*—Let us now glance rapidly over these different testimonies to faith and practice. The inscriptions[1] are the most useful. As we look at them in the galleries of the Vatican and Lateran, we are struck at once with the noble Roman names which appear on them. This is a point already noticed in the case of Domitilla and Cæcilia; and we notice here representations of some of the best families, which show that at Rome the social status of the Christians was not altogether lowly. Another thing that strikes us is the beauty of the Christian names, which are often recorded without any addition, and in forms which Christian hope introduced; thus we find such names as "Innocence," "Constancy," "Rest," "Resurrection," or a phrase reminding us of our English Puritans, such as, "Thanks to God," "What God wills," and so forth. And without gainsaying, these early Christian names, with their expressive faith and resignation, are just of a piece with the hopefulness which breathes all through the

[1] See a useful selection in Dr. Northcote's "Epitaphs of the Catacombs."

early epitaphs, with scarcely an exception. We look across at the pagan inscriptions, which are arranged on the opposite walls of the Vatican Gallery, and we mark at once the hopelessness, and sometimes the rebellious anger which are there set forth. The pagan has said farewell to his dead, as it seems for ever; but the Christian says good-bye only until death, which has parted, shall once more unite. In the earlier inscriptions the words are few and simple, and often the baptismal name occurs alone, or with the significant addition of the words "in peace," which are probably flanked by some one or more of the primitive Christian symbols. As time passed on, this early simplicity gave way to far more elaborate descriptions of the person and his virtues, frequently approaching the inflated unreality which is not unknown in our own monuments of the dead. Omitting minor particulars, no reader of the inscriptions which we are considering can fail to admire the happiness of family life, the tender and true affection of husband and wife, brother and sister, parents and child, which are everywhere displayed. These instances are rarely equalled on pagan tombs, and their quantity is not even faintly approached by those outside the Christian Church, for the Church first consecrated the family.

(*b.*) *Frescoes, paintings, and sculpture.*—Turning to the frescoes or paintings, with which we combine the sculptures met with on sarcophagi in the Catacombs, we find that the Christians took and

purified the art[1] of their times. The undoubted earliest specimens are vividly bright colourings on white plaster, sometimes of a Bible scene or character; sometimes of a classical story, such as that of Orpheus, in a Christian setting; sometimes of an emblematic scene, such as the harvest; sometimes of mere festoon and ornament. The earlier examples are said to be more simple and spontaneous, though frequently uncouth, and often unduly influenced by pagan models, which are barely Christianised. It is evident, then, that the earliest Roman Christianity did not disdain to employ art; but it is equally evident that with the lapse of time the treatment became rigidly conventional, whilst with the fourth century we get far more elaboration of conception and execution. Most noticeable is the absence of all representation of the Passion; no single Crucifixion scene has been represented in the Catacombs; and, until the fifth century, our Lord is always represented with a gentle and winning expression of face. It was reserved for later art to desert these early Christian instincts, and to substitute in their place the crucifixions and entombments, and the awful horror and sternness of mediæval portraits of Christ as *Rex tremendæ Majestatis*.

(*c.*) *Symbols.*—The symbols[2] are thoroughly charac-

[1] See Withrow's chapter on Early Christian Art, and the references there given. Works on the subject in English are R. St. J. Tyrwhitt's "Christian Art and Symbolism," and Mrs. Jameson's "Sacred Art." In French, Didron's *Iconographie Chrétienne* is a classical authority. Northcote and Brownlow have arranged the paintings chronologically in vol. ii. book iii. of *Roma Sotterannea*, but Mr. Marriott's criticism should be read as well.

[2] See Withrow's chapter on the Symbolism of the Catacombs

teristic of early Christianity, which was almost forced, to express itself in emblems intelligible only to the initiated. Many of these were adapted from paganism, but amongst Christians were invested with a new and more exalted meaning. There were the palm, the crown, the ship, which are also found in heathen art; but on the tomb of a Christian they denote the palm and crown of victory, and the Church of Christ, outside which is no salvation. Then we find the anchor of hope, the door of peace, the olive leaf of reconciliation; and besides, the peacock, the phœnix, the stag, the hare, the horse, the lion, each one with its own suggestion. Most notable is the constant figure of the Good Shepherd, with its tender associations, often elaborated from a symbol into a rich picture. He carries the lost sheep, and, as is noticed by Mr. Matthew Arnold, in a well-known poem,[1] not infrequently the goat. One other familiar symbol must be noticed with these, the fish, which was a kind of cryptogram for our Lord, and finds its explanation in the fact that the initial letters of "Jesus Christ, God's Son," form in Greek the word *fish*. Besides all these religious symbols there were those which represented the trade, or occupation, or the name of the deceased. Not infrequently we find a kind of rebus to designate the name, just as in your Cathedral you find so frequently the gold well of Prior Goldwell. Thus in the Catacombs we find, for instance, the lion as a guide to the tomb of some dead *Leo*.

[1] "The Good Shepherd with the Kid." "Poems" (Macmillan), p. 184.

Testimony of the Catacombs to certain special points of doctrine.—But what is the dogmatic evidence[1] of the Catacombs in relation to one or two specific doctrines? The last great event in Christendom when the Catacombs were rediscovered in 1578 was the Council of Trent; the last great event in our own Church was the Reformation settlement under Queen Elizabeth. The vast difference between the two positions is displayed in detail by Jewel in his Apology. Briefly, we may call them the primitive and the Roman Catholic. Now which of the two, in what is mainly characteristic, is supported by "Rome underground," and now brought to light? Let me rapidly run through the testimony of the Catacombs upon certain crucial points.

(1.) *Condition of the dead.*—As regards the condition of the dead, there is no idea of purgatory during the period under review. Whilst no speculations are indulged in concerning the dead, there is no doubt at all of the immediate happiness of the Christian departed. Most noticeable in this connection is the fact that we get *requiescit*, an indicative of certainty, and not *requiescat*, a conjunctive of entreaty. "He went to God," "Thou dost repose for ever," "In peace"—these and such as these are the familiar words on innumerable tombs. At the same time an expression of prayer for the departed is

[1] On the general subject, see Mons. T. Roller's *Les Catacombes de Rome*. His conclusions, which form an appendix to volume ii., are a most useful and trustworthy summary. For the facts in detail, see vol. ii. caps. 71 and 72. Withrow is not quite so good as usual in what he says about the doctrinal teachings of the Catacombs.

found here and there, but rarely in comparison. It often takes the shape of an acclamation, as, "May you live in God," "God refresh thee," "Peace to thee;" but the earliest instance of a request for prayer yet found is not earlier than A.D. 380,[1] which is the extreme end of the period now under consideration.

(2.) *The Blessed Virgin Mary.*—As regards the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mr. Wharton Marriott has rigorously examined all the specimens of early Catacomb art in which a Madonna might be recognised or imagined. He says: "Of all the pictures in the Catacombs the date of which can be referred to the first four centuries of our era, there is not one in which the Virgin is represented which is not purely Scriptural in its character. Even if (which is doubtful) some of the figures known as *Oranti* had reference to her, those figures precisely resemble others in which ordinary persons recently deceased were represented, whether men or women. Christian art at this time, to use Dr. Northcote's own expression, was kept strictly within the limits of the canonical books."[2]

(3.) *Worship of saints.*—As regards the worship of saints, reverence for saints and martyrs was a very early and a most natural growth in those days of persecution.[3] It was this which prompted

[1] See De' Rossi's *Inscriptiones*, under date; also Withrow, p. 425; Roller, vol. i. cap. 33; vol. ii. cap. 71.

[2] See W. B. Marriott, "Testimony of the Catacombs," pp. 11–32, for discussion; p. 60 for the recapitulation quoted above; Roller, ii. 354.

[3] Roller, ii. 189.

the practice of building chapels and basilicas over the graves of the dead; but although we have evident traces of the very early rise of this practice, and although we know that a celebration of Holy Communion, probably, or at all events an agape or love feast, was held over the graves of the dead, there is no recorded inscription or proof of an early date to show that there was prayer to, or worship of any martyr. One or two supposed instances are so rare as to suggest either ignorant exceptions to a rule, or evidence of much later date.

(4.) *The Mass.* — Then with regard to the Mass. We must not expect to get much evidence from the Catacombs as to the *doctrine* of the Holy Communion. That must be sought in the writings of the early Church. Still it is noticeable that in the representations of the celebration of this sacrament no prostration or adoration is observable in any subject which belongs to the first five centuries. There are a number of symbols which evidently stand for the Eucharist, *e.g.*, the fish, the basket of bread, and hint at its being considered a real means of grace. Nothing can be gathered with any certainty as to the manner and time of its celebration. It is, however, extremely likely that superstition was sometimes attached to the observance, and the little[1] bottles of wine so often found in the Catacombs are generally supposed to have contained Eucharistic wine. It is certain that Holy Communion was cele-

[1] Withrow, p. 369.

brated in the Catacombs,[1] but how soon the practice began we cannot say positively, and no real conclusion can be given until the question of the relation of the Agape to the Eucharist in the Catacombs has been thoroughly discussed. At present it seems probable that the Agape was celebrated from the earliest times in the Catacombs, and that the Eucharist superseded this when the Agape was no longer observed.

(5.) *The Scriptures.*—One more point may be mentioned in this hasty review, and that is the evident knowledge of Bible events which is displayed. No doubt the list of artistic subjects became more and more traditional, but how extensive the choice is! Nearly all the great Scripture scenes are constantly represented;[2] and it stands to reason that it would have been practically meaningless to portray such events unless Bible history were thoroughly well known. The very first writer of the Roman Church, St. Clement, himself displays, and postulates on the part of his readers, a wonderful familiarity with the Scripture record; and the Catacombs prove, what we should otherwise have suspected, that this extensive knowledge of the great events of history with their meaning did not die out in the Rome of the early centuries.

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But here we must stop. Our limits make it im-

[1] Withrow, p. 541. One of the best discussions of the question can be followed in Roller (i. caps. xii. and xxv.; ii. cap. liii.).

[2] A list of subjects in the so-called *Circlo Biblico* will be found in Withrow, p. 282.

possible to examine other points of evidence, such as the Petrine primacy,[1] the organisation of the Church,[2] the ceremonies of the Church, and so forth. It must suffice to say summarily that the testimony of the Roman Catacombs shows an almost uniformly simple belief and practice in the earliest days, with which it is indeed hard to reconcile very much in modern Papal Rome that meets our eyes as we leave those subterranean crypts of the past, and make our way to the numerous churches and ecclesiastical buildings above ground.[3]

[1] See Marriott's full examination of the subject, "Testimony of the Catacombs," p. 68.

[2] From the inscriptions in Dr. Northcote's "Epitaphs of the Catacombs," pp. 110–130, it will be seen that we can practically restore the hierarchy of the early Roman Church with its various grades.

[3] A recent and excellent account of the Catacombs, by a well-known antiquary, will be found in pp. 139–213 of M. Gaston Boissier's "Rome and Pompeii," translated by D. Havelock Fisher (Fisher Unwin, 1896).

Jerome.

BY THE

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JEROME.

ST. JEROME presents the most striking figure of all the Latin Fathers. His character, though marred by many failings, has a picturesque interest and an attractive charm which are possessed by neither St. Ambrose, St. Augustine, nor Gregory the Great. Hence has arisen his frequent representation in art, so that there is scarcely a gallery in which we cannot discover the pale emaciated features of a Jerome, either doing penance in the desert, or in the cloister with his books. Our own National Gallery exhibits among others that representation of St. Jerome which I would fain leave impressed upon our minds—Jerome in his library, Jerome the monk, but above all the translator and student of the Bible.

The age of St. Jerome.—St. Jerome lived in an age of transition. His life covers the last sixty years of the fourth century, and the first twenty years of the fifth. Paganism was slowly expiring; Christianity was becoming the recognised religion of the civilised world. Rome was tottering to ruin. The barbarians were at her gate. Heathenism had lost all restraining influence; so that, as Jerome vividly describes it, society

was rotten to the core. Nor was Christianity as yet able to stay the rapid ruin of the old civilisation. Modern missions witness to the dangers that beset hereditary Christianity in its earlier generations, after it has lost the kindling love of its first enthusiasm, and before it has had time to raise the moral tone of the people at large. So desperate was the state of society, that the best of Christians, many of them led by Jerome, fled out of the world to monasteries and convents, instead of staying in the world, if haply they might help to save it.

As to the Church itself, the age of persecutions had been succeeded by the age of heresies. St. Jerome was a boy of fifteen when, to use his own famous sentence, "the whole world groaned, and was astonished to find itself Arian."[1] He himself studied at Antioch under Apollinaris, and was present at the Council of Constantinople, where both Apollinaris and Macedonius were condemned. At the same time the Church was growing in wealth and influence. Bishoprics were becoming the ground of most unseemly struggles. Pope Damasus, the patron of Jerome, only attained the Papal chair after a strife in which blood was shed in the very churches; and the Roman Consul, Prætextatus, used in sport to say to Damasus, "Make me Bishop of Rome, and I will at once turn Christian."[2] In such critical days Jerome's lot was cast.

[1] "Ingemuit totus orbis, et Arianum se esse miratus est."—"Dialogue against Luciferians," 19.

[2] "To Pammachius against John of Jerusalem," 8.

His life.—St. Jerome, when young, travelled widely. This came about partly from a natural thirst for knowledge, partly also from the working of a restless spirit, which found only comparative quiet even in the solitary's cave at Bethlehem. A rapid survey of his life will show how varied were the scenes he visited, while his writings witness what rich stores of knowledge he thus acquired. God was thus equipping Jerome for his greatest work.

His education began in Stridon, his native town, on the borders of Dalmatia.[1] Though born of Christian parents, he was not baptized in infancy, through that false estimate of the heinousness of post-baptismal sin which our own Articles condemn.[2] He grumbles at his schoolmaster, Orbilius, as "cross," and confesses that he had to be dragged from the arms of his grandmother to school.[3] He completed his education at Rome under the grammarian Donatus, to whose system schoolboys owe the groundwork of their Latin grammars to the present day. Jerome sadly confesses that he did not escape the moral snares of Rome; yet He who rescued Onesimus from the dregs of that corrupt city now laid His hand on Jerome, and he was baptized. With Bonosus, his foster brother, and other friends, he then spent his Sundays in visits to the Catacombs,[4]

[1] The modern Herzegovina. [2] Article XVI.

[3] "Ad Orbilium sævientem de aviæ sinu tractum esse captivum." — "Apol. against Rufinus," i. 30.

[4] Pope Damasus, subsequently Jerome's greatest patron, did much to preserve and restore these interesting and valuable memorials ("Commentary on Ezekiel," xl.).

where the epitaphs of confessors and martyrs made a permanent impression on his life.

We next follow him to Gaul, on a literary tour. At Treves he saw among others some of the British tribes; and there he began his theological studies, and the collection of that library which became the companion of all his travels, and the solace of his woes.

Turning east, we once more find him at his home in Stridon, where he complains of the deadness of the people, and the dulness of their bishop.[1] The fact is that he was now catching fire with ascetic zeal; and we can well imagine that the eager youth with his monkish tendencies would be about as welcome to the old-fashioned bishop as the progressive young curate, full of all sorts of new ideas, is to many a prelate of to-day.

At Aquileia, close to Stridon, Jerome collected a small band of like-minded men,[2] and began to live the ascetic life. What happened we do not know: it was always Jerome's fate to be in a quarrel, and to set people by the ears; and so it was at Aquileia. *Subitus turbo, impia avulsio*[3]—that is all he tersely tells

[1] Lupicinus, Letter vii. 5.

[2] Among these were Rufinus (who became afterwards his bitterest opponent), Heliodorus, and his foster brother, Bonosus. When Bonosus retired from the world to a small rocky island, Jerome made the playful allusion, "Bonosus, like a true son of the Fish, has taken to water!" The reference is to the primitive cryptogram found in the Catacombs, ΙΧΘΥΣ, a favourite emblem of Christ. The letters of the Greek word Fish form the initials of the following, "Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour." So Tertullian speaks of Christians as "little fishes born by our Fish Jesus Christ" (Tertullian on Baptism, i.; Jerome, Letter vii. 3).

[3] Letter iii. 3.

us. "Some sudden whirlwind, some impious wrench" tore asunder the little band, and cast Jerome once more adrift from his moorings.

Several of the friends soon met again at Antioch, the next station in this itinerary. Death called away some;[1] others, as Heliodorus, returned to social life; Jerome himself was at death's door. This visit to Syria was, however, a marked turning-point in his life. Here he first saw real hermit life; here he commenced to learn the Hebrew language;[2] here too he experienced that dream of morbid fancy, which led him to renounce for a time all love of the classics,[3] and to devote his energy to the harsh sounds of Hebrew, and to the distasteful ruggedness of the Prophets.[4] He now visited hermits and monks in the Syrian desert, and for a time lived their life. But his famous letter to Eustochium, written at this crisis, shows how ineffectual was the solitary life even to secure those negative virtues for which a life of active service was too often abandoned.

He was soon in hot water again. Not only did he become entangled in the snares of the Meletian schism

[1] Of the loss of his friend Innocent, he says, "I lost one of my two eyes," adding from one of his favourite classics, "Animæ dimidium meæ" (Hor. c. i. 3). Jerome was capable of the warmest affection.

[2] Letter cxxv. 12. His teacher was a converted Jew. Afterwards he continued his studies at Bethlehem under a Jew named *Baraninas*, who taught him at great cost under cover of night. "He presented me in his own person a second edition of Nicodemus" (Letter lxxxiv. 3). Rufinus coarsely taunted him with being a pupil of *Barabbas*. Jerome never liked the Jews, and frankly avowed it.

[3] Letter xxii. 30. [4] "Stridentia anhelaque verba" (Letter xcv.).

at Antioch, where he was ordained priest by Paulinus, one of the three rival bishops of that see; but he quarrelled with his friends the monks, whom he then compared to wild beasts,[1] and left them.

After a short residence of two years at Constantinople, where he listened to the celebrated Gregory of Nazianzus, and was present at the Council over which Gregory presided,[2] we find him again travelling to Rome, in company with Epiphanius of Cyprus, and Paulinus, the bishop from whom he had received Holy Orders.

Two features of this visit determined the life-work of Jerome. One was the patronage of Pope Damasus, whose adviser and secretary he seems to have become.[3] Damasus at least deserves our praise for encouraging Jerome in every way to follow up his Biblical studies. Not only did he ply him with questions on various matters, such as the meaning of Hosanna, the Seraphim, and other points of criticism, but he made that definite request for a revised translation of the Bible which issued in Jerome's Vulgate.

The other feature of the visit was no less remarkable. It was the marvellous fascination which this eccentric student was able to exert over some of the richest and most noble ladies of Rome. A man of Jerome's passionate enthusiasm, who did nothing and said nothing

[1] Letter xvii. 3.

[2] The famous Council of Constantinople, A.D. 381, at which Apollinarianism was condemned.

[3] Damasus, it is said, was "Jerome's mouthpiece."

by halves—whose fervid torrent of language stayed at nothing but swept everything before it, did not influence many strong men of calm judgment, save that as a scholar and critic he won their admiration of his lively wit and brilliant learning; but with many of the ladies of Rome, his enthusiastic temperament and burning eloquence produced most marvellous results. Many of them gave up wealth, position, home, and even children, in order to embrace, under his guidance, the ascetic life, and so perchance find rest for their souls. Wearied with the dissipation and luxury of Roman life, unable to stem the tide of worldliness which threatened to sweep them away in its current, they grasped at this new idea as a drowning man at a straw, and thereby largely helped to make monasticism the dominant form of Christianity for centuries in the Western Church.

All this raised a terrible storm. The laity and the clergy were alike alarmed. Widows and daughters of old patrician families refused marriage, and devoted their wealth to charity of various kinds. The clergy found their flocks deserting them, while they were themselves held up to public scorn. No picture which Jerome has drawn of life in Rome can have been more exasperating than that in which he lashed with severest satire the indolent, luxurious, and even vicious priest.[1] "The Christians to the lions" had become a cry of the past, but murmurs were openly heard that the monks should be cast into the Tiber.

[1] Letter xxii., to Eustochium.

Damasus was dead, and his successor was no friend to Jerome. Sadly but wisely he turned his back, as he describes it, on "Babylon," having vainly tried[1] "to sing the Lord's songs in a strange land."

He now bent his steps once more eastward. At Antioch he was joined by Paula and her daughter Eustochium, two of the noble ladies whom he had won to the "religious" life. Together they paid that visit to the holy places of Palestine which Jerome describes with such enthusiasm, and which did much to make religious pilgrimages so popular in after days. Then, after a brief visit to Egypt, where Jerome rejoiced to meet the blind teacher Didymus, and where they shared the coarse and homely fare of the monks of Nitria, the little company finally settled down at Bethlehem. A monastery was built, over which St. Jerome presided, and a convent, which was under the care of Paula and Eustochium. To these was added a hospital for the reception of pilgrims and other travellers, and thus at last Jerome's restless spirit found a home, and that leisure which those studies demanded for which a Divine Providence had been all along preparing him.

Here for thirty-four years Jerome lived and read and wrote.[2] Here in a cave close to that of the Nativity

[1] Letter xlv. 6. "Pray for me that after Babylon I may see Jerusalem once more; that Joshua may have dominion over me, not Nebuchadnezzar; that Ezra may come and restore me to my own country."

[2] His life is described by one who saw it as "Totus in lectione, totus in libris." As Jerome said of Nepotianus, "he made his heart *a library of Christ*."

his Vulgate was translated. Here his numerous letters and treatises, "always vigorous, never dull,"[1] made this militant monk one of the most prominent figures of that age. Here at last he died, and was buried close to the spot where the Saviour was born.

Many troubles beset his closing years. It goes without saying that this most combative of Churchmen was constantly plunged in controversy. So irritated were the Pelagian party by his attacks that they assailed and burned the monastery, from which Jerome himself escaped into a tower. At another time the Huns invaded Syria, and the ladies of the convent were taken to Joppa, and placed on board ship. One letter describes how, while he is writing, the ropes are being cast off, and the sailors are preparing for the voyage; but at the last moment the danger was averted, and they returned to Bethlehem.

In his old age his eyesight failed, and he complains that the smallness of the Hebrew letters tried him. First Paula, then Eustochium were taken before him; and at last, bereft of his friends, tried by long sickness, yet vigorous and full of interest to the last, this strange great man passed to his account. His life had indeed been swept by many a storm, yet there is that in his writings which enables us to believe that "at eventide there was light."

I shall now try to indicate some of the main characteristics which stand out from this life.

Jerome as a writer.—It is as a writer that Jerome

[1] Dean Farrar.

chiefly claims our notice. Though ordained priest by Paulinus, he does not seem ever to have exercised that office.[1] In fact, he plainly told Paulinus that so long as it did not interfere with his life as a monk, he might give or withhold ordination just as he pleased. Nor have we any trace of his engaging in anything like pastoral work. But he had a most fertile pen, and he wielded it with unbounded energy. His numerous letters and other writings teem with examples of his wide learning, and of vivid illustrations of that age. He was not a principal actor in any of the great events of the time, but no controversy arose which was not sooner or later referred to Jerome, and there are few contemporary events to which he has not added some charm of interest by his versatile genius and ready pen.[2] His writings are a lasting monument. When Blesilla, Paula's daughter, died, Jerome wrote to the sorrowing mother in language which, though an instance of his extravagant style, yet illustrates this undoubted fact: "No page will I write in which Blesilla's name shall not occur. Living as she does with Christ im heaven, she will live also on the

[1] "To Pammachius against John of Jerusalem," 41. His words to Paulinus were, "Did I ask to be ordained by you? If in bestowing the office of presbyter you do not strip us of the monastic state, you can bestow or withhold ordination as you think best." It is a remarkable fact that, though Jerome held high views of the office of presbyter, yet he does not, either by translation in the Vulgate or by allusion in his works, refer to them as *sacerdotes;* but he seems to use this word of bishops (Letter vii. 5). See note in Wace and Schaff.

[2] This side of Jerome is a good illustration of our Lord's words, "Every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, *which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old*" (Matt. xiii. 52).

lips of men. *In my writings she shall never die*" (xxxix. 7). That last prophecy, so far as Jerome's writings are concerned, has been amply justified.

His controversies.—Jerome's controversies cannot be passed over in silence, but in controversy he is at his worst. Coarser personal allusions; more ungoverned abuse; a greater exhibition of hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness can rarely have disgraced the page of literature. Sensitive and vain, the slightest opposition seems to have lashed him into a fury, and then his language defied all self-control. Let us take his treatment of one opponent. He parodies the name of Vigilantius, i.e., *the watchful*, as Dormitantius, i.e., *the sleepy-head*. He sneers at him as the son of a tapster, and advises him to stick to testing wine, and the money paid at the bar, rather than attempt to test the Scriptures. In another passage he enumerates all the monsters to which the world has given birth—Leviathan, Behemoth, Cerberus, the Chimæra, the Hydra, Geryon, Cacus, and others— "Gaul alone," he adds, "has had no monsters. . . All at once Vigilantius, or rather Dormitantius, appears." He calls on him to repent, in which case he promises as much chance of forgiveness as Origen gave to the devil.[1] We cannot wonder that his friends were so dismayed that on one occasion they bought up his work directly it appeared. But as Jerome drily said when he heard of it, *nescit vox missa reverti*—"the word once uttered knows no recall."

[1] Letter lxi. 4. "You may obtain pardon when the devil himself shall obtain it" ("Treatise against Vigilantius," i.).

By his writings against the Pelagians, Jerome did service as a champion of the truth; but he lacked Augustine's clear insight into the doctrines of grace, so that his own position was rather semi-Pelagian than strongly Augustinian. Many of his works were devoted to the most extravagant praise of celibacy and the monastic life; and this led him into bitter contention with those who, like Helvidius, denied the perpetual virginity of the Mother of our Lord—a question which we have no sufficient data to decide. Vigilantius and Jovinian, two of his opponents, have been called "Protestants before their time;" but, however premature may have been their protests, and however faulty some of their views, it is clear that they attacked words of Jerome on the meritorious value of asceticism, and on the honour due to martyrs and their relics, which in succeeding ages led to serious error.

To one controversy we can turn with pleasure. In the disputes between Jerome and Augustine, both acted with generosity and self-control. Two points were raised between them, and each in turn yielded to the other.

Augustine had questioned the wisdom of Jerome's great purpose of translating the Old Testament from the original Hebrew. Many had taken alarm; some were even charging him with corrupting the Scriptures; and Augustine himself had his fears. But Jerome on this occasion practised unwonted self-control, patiently listened to his younger friend, and so won his approval of the work.

They had also a curious dispute as to the contention between St. Peter and St. Paul at Antioch. According to Jerome, there was no real contention, but the whole scene was got up as a sort of sham fight, to demonstrate to the Judaisers the folly of their position. Against this Augustine rightly protested. He saw that this would have been to contend for truth by acting a lie. Moreover, he realised that the inspiration of Scripture was at stake, and that a great principle of interpretation was thus surrendered. His words are useful for these times. "It is," he says, "a most pernicious doctrine to say that there is any falsehood in that holy book" (Ep. 28). "If Peter was not wrong, and if Paul was wrong when he said in a book of Holy Scripture that Peter was wrong, then the whole authority of Scripture . . . totters and falls" (Ep. 40). "I declare to you that I most firmly believe that none of the authors of Holy Scripture have committed any error therein; . . . and you, I suppose, agree with me in this opinion." Happily, as Augustine yielded to Jerome in the matter of a new version, so now the older Jerome yielded to his younger friend as to the scene at Antioch; and very shortly before his death the aged monk of Bethlehem wrote to Augustine an affectionate tribute of esteem.

Jerome's monasticism.—Jerome's fame rests mainly on two widely different foundations: he ranks among the founders of monasticism; he gave to Europe its Latin Bible. The former was the one piece of active organisation to which he bent his vigorous power, and which he personally tested in his own experience. It

may well be doubted whether the attempt thus to subdue the flesh succeeded. Jerome in Chalcis seems to have been much the same as Jerome in Rome. To use one of his own apt quotations,

"Cœlum non animum mutant qui trans mare currunt."[1]

I have already alluded to the letter to Eustochium in which he describes his life in Syria. It is a sad confession of his failure thus to banish the passions which wrought so tempestuously within him. "How often, when I was living in the desert, parched by a burning sun, did I fancy myself among the pleasures of Rome! Sackcloth disfigured my unshapely limbs, and my skin from long neglect had become as black as an Ethiopian's. . . . And although in my fear of hell I had consigned myself to this prison, where I had no companions but scorpions and wild beasts, I often thought myself amid bevies of girls. My face was pale, and my frame chilled with fasting; yet my mind was burning with desire, and the fires of lust kept bubbling up before me, when my flesh was as good as dead. Helpless, I cast myself at the feet of Jesus, I wiped them with my hair, and then I subdued my rebellious body by weeks of fasting." "At other times I felt myself amid angelic hosts, and for joy and gladness sang, 'Because of the savour of Thy good ointments we will run after Thee.'"[2]

Jerome is the chief champion of the unmarried state; but his praise of it often descends to extravagant and even irreverent nonsense. To speak of Eustochium

[1] Hor. Ep. I. ii. 27. [2] Letter xxii.

as the daughter-in-law of God (*socrus Dei*), because of her union with Christ, is a gross irreverence; to say that St. Peter "washed off the filth of marriage in the blood of martyrdom" is unscriptural and absurd. But Jerome could steer no middle course, and he utterly failed to realise that, while the unmarried life is to some the undoubted gift of God, to most men that gift, for an equally holy service, is in the bonds of wedlock. And not only so—Jerome would have his followers trample on the most sacred domestic ties. Upbraiding Heliodorus for returning to Aquileia from the higher sanctity of monasticism, he says, "Should your little nephew hang upon your neck, pay no regard to him; should your mother show you the breasts at which she nursed you, heed her not; should your father prostrate himself on the threshold, trample him under foot and go your way."[1] It is even with an air of triumph that he says of Paula, "*Spoliavit filios*" (She robbed her children), as though by such mistaken charity she could "do God service."

We do not deny that this seclusion from the world met a felt need of those days, or that monasteries had their use. Men and women were weary of the folly, the waste, the sin which abounded; they felt powerless to make any impression upon them; and with the semi-Manicheism of that age they deemed it the only safeguard to ill-treat their bodies and to fly from the world. But while we allow the temporary service rendered, as a whole the monastic life failed of its pur-

[1] Letter xxv. 2.

pose. Monasteries made a few saints; they left many sinners. Some lives became holier and happier; many became more degraded. It has been said, "You cannot violate nature with impunity." The very passions which drove men into the desert found new ways of indulgence; and the very chords which men wished to deaden seem to have vibrated with increased intensity.

Doubtless there have been splendid exceptions. St. Benedict's rule of labour created a great safeguard against such morbid reaction. But a wrong principle lay at the root of the system: it drew the best of mankind away from the society that sorely needed them. The Gospel teaches men not to forsake the world, but to hallow it.

Jerome's Vulgate.—We come to Jerome's greatest work, the *Editio Vulgata*, or current edition of the Latin Bible. Its own history is its highest praise; for, though at first aided by no official sanction, it won its way by its intrinsic merit to be the Latin Bible of the people. Our English Bible of 1611 A.D. has a similar history. Like the Vulgate, it was commenced with many misgivings, and when it appeared it met with coldness and opposition. Yet, though it lacked all formal authority, it gradually carried the day.

The need of a new version.—Jerome's version met a serious need. The text of the old Latin Bible had become hopelessly corrupt. Various Latin translations had been made in different countries, our own Britain, it is thought, contributing one. As a result, Jerome tells Pope Damasus that there were "almost

as many forms of text as there were copies," and Augustine bears similar testimony.[1] It would have been simply lamentable had the wide dissemination of the Bible, which was then at hand, been marred by such variations of text and errors of translation. God ordered it otherwise. The time was come for a rapid reception of the Scriptures in Europe, and the man was raised up who was marvellously fitted to prepare the way.

Its character.—There were several stages in Jerome's work of Bible revision, and the present Vulgate is not a uniform work, but is a compilation from the several versions which he made. He began by a cursory revision of the old Latin text, of which we have an instance in the Acts and Epistles. Next we find him working out a more careful revision from the Greek of the Septuagint and New Testament, as in the Psalms and Gospels. Lastly, in the rest of the Old Testament, we have the most original work of all, namely, his own translation from the Hebrew.

You will observe that the version of the Psalms differs in its history from that of the rest of the Old Testament. Instead of Jerome's latest version from the Hebrew, we there have his Gallican Psalter, which is based upon the Septuagint. The fact is interesting as illustrating our own two versions of the Psalms, and also the special place which that book holds in the devotional life of the people. Long use had so enshrined the older Gallican Psalter in the affections of Christians, that it

[1] Jerome, "Preface to Gospels;" Augustine, *De Doct. Christ.* ii. 11–15.

was felt impossible to substitute the more accurate version. Just so, the revisers of our Prayer Book in 1662 declined to substitute the Psalms from the Authorised Version for the older familiar words. As the Gallican Psalter held its own in the Authorised Vulgate, so the incomparable rhythm and poetic fire of Cranmer's version still remain in our Prayer Book version of the Psalms. Cranmer's "Great Bible" of 1539 was a revision of that of Tyndale and Coverdale. Our own Prayer Book Psalter is based originally on Jerome's Gallican Psalter. Its close correspondence in some points with the Septuagint may be seen by the English reader, who can compare Psalm xiv. in the Prayer Book with the same Psalm in the English Bible. Several verses which crept into a LXX. copy from Romans iii. are retained in our Prayer Book version. They form a quotation in the Old Testament from the New!

Jerome's defence of this work was as vigorous as usual. He calls his detractors "poor creatures"[1] and "two-legged donkeys."[2] "If they do not like water from the purest fountain-head, let them drink of the muddy streams." Alluding to the untenable reading καιρῷ for κυρίῳ, in Rom. xii. 11, he says, "Let them read,[3] 'Rejoicing in hope, serving the *time*;' let us read, 'Rejoicing in hope, serving the *Lord*.' Let them be satisfied with, 'It is a *human* saying, and worthy of

[1] *Homunculi.* [2] *Bipedes aselli.*

[3] Alluding to the reading καιρῷ for κυρίῳ in Rom. xii. 11, and ἀνθρώπινος for πιστός in 1 Tim. iii. 1 (Letter xxviii.).

all acceptation;' let us err with the Greeks (*i.e.*, with the Apostle, who wrote in Greek), 'It is a *faithful* saying.'" With characteristic satire he quotes the old Greek proverb ὄνῳ λύρα, "A lyre is no use to a donkey."[1]

We have seen that even Augustine wrote to deprecate his new translation from the Hebrew. He tells the well-known story of an African bishop who seriously offended his congregation by reading the history of Jonah from Jerome's version. Jerome had substituted the word *hedera*, "ivy," for the old familiar *cucurbita*, or "gourd"; but when the bishop read how God prepared the *ivy* to cover Jonah, the people would have none of it, but rose to their feet with shouts of "gourd," and the bishop had to choose between parting from Jerome or his flock.[2]

Its influence.—But if we would estimate the true value of the Latin Vulgate, we must recall the position which the Latin language held at this time. Many people associate Latin, as an ecclesiastical language, with a desire to withhold the Bible from the people, and to shroud devotion in mystery. This is sadly true in the Church of Rome at the present day; but in Jerome's time it was not so. Latin was then becoming the most widely-known language throughout the west of Europe. When the tribes of the north settled in their new homes in the southern plains of Europe, they forsook their old Teutonic tongue, and adopted a language founded on Latin. For these men Jerome's version was a true *Vulgata Editio;* it declared to

[1] Letter xxvii. [2] Letter civ.

them in their own new tongue the wonderful works of God. Just when the Latin language was becoming understood by vast multitudes of mankind, just when the tribes which spread over Europe were prepared to welcome the Gospel, the only man who for centuries could have brought such unique qualifications to the work appeared.

Spread of the Gospel.—The name of Jerome may therefore be indirectly associated with the missionary enterprise of the Church. Not only did he translate the version which became the Bible of Europe for hundreds of years, but the monastic system which he fostered proved for a time the great missionary agency of the West. It is true that there was in the monastic life that which constituted a real danger to the social system of Christianity, for it withdrew from the world those who would most have leavened it. Yet this danger was corrected by a quality inherent in our faith —I mean its expansive energy. The true Christian is a light wherever you place him. And so hermitages became monasteries, and monasteries became seminaries for men fired with missionary enthusiasm.[1] Each band of monks, by their very retirement from the busy world, became an outpost of Christianity on the frontiers of heathendom, and bore the Gospel, largely in the words of Jerome's Vulgate, far and wide.

Jerome himself, it is true, does not display much of

[1] Thus Lerins sent forth its Patrick, Iona its Aidan, Lindisfarne its Cuthbert, Exeter its Boniface.

what we now call missionary enthusiasm; but there is one passage well worthy of notice, in which he describes with burning words the conquering march of the Cross through heathen lands. As history, it is marred by his usual rhetorical exaggeration; but we may read it as a prophecy, and as one which Jerome's own work is still helping to fulfil. "Before the Resurrection of Christ," he says, "God was 'known in Judah' only, and 'His name was great in Israel' alone. Where in those days were the inhabitants of the globe from India to Britain, and from the frozen zone of the north to the burning heat of the Atlantic Ocean? Where were the countless peoples of the world,

'Unlike in tongue, unlike in dress and arms?'[1]

They were crushed like fishes and locusts, like flies and gnats. But now the voices and writings of all nations proclaim the Passion and Resurrection of Christ. The immortality of the soul . . . is now the familiar theme of Indian and Persian, of Goth and Egyptian. The fierce Bessians, and the throng of skin-clad savages who used to offer human sacrifices . . . have broken out of their harsh discord into the sweet music of the Cross, and Christ is the one cry of all the world."[2]

Jerome on the Canon.—Another matter in which

[1] "Quam variæ linguis, habitu tam vestis et armis?"
—VIRG. *Æn.* viii. 723.

[2] Letter lx. 4.

Jerome has signally influenced our own Church is in helping to settle the Canon of Scripture. His authority is directly quoted in our Sixth Article. After enumerating the list of Old Testament writings, as we of the Protestant Churches have it, that Article goes on to speak of the Apocrypha, "And the other books, as Hierome saith, the Church doth read for example of life and instruction of manners, yet doth it not apply them to establish any doctrine."[1] Thus not only did Jerome give to the Western Church a more accurate version of Holy Scripture, but he also helped largely to decide what books ought to be regarded as inspired. In this matter Augustine erred, for he wavered in favour of certain apocryphal books. He had not the learning or critical skill sufficient for a clear, decisive judgment. Jerome, though far inferior to Augustine as a theologian, was, as a Biblical critic, the most competent man, since Origen, to form such a decision.

Jerome as a theologian.—Jerome's influence as a theologian tended in two strangely different directions. So far as his purely Biblical work is concerned, we have seen how material and far-reaching was its effect upon the spread of the Gospel. But by his extravagant praise of asceticism, by his unwise esteem for martyrs and their relics, and by his exaggerated respect for the See of Rome,[2] his name hindered almost as much as it

[1] Preface to Books of Solomon, and *Prologus Galeatus.*

[2] Letter xvi. "Whoever adheres to the chair of Peter, he is mine." This was his decision when pressed as to the conflicting use of *Hypostasis*, *Ousia*, and *Prosopon.*

helped the work of the Reformation. It is true that in matters of Bible criticism his labours proved of sterling value to that movement,[1] but for theological guidance it was Augustine to whom the Reformers looked, while Jerome was rather the patron saint of those who remained loyal to the so-called "Chair of St. Peter."

It is thus most significant that, while the Church of Rome, in her Collect[2] for St. Jerome's day, extols his merits as an expounder of Scripture, our own Church rather honours him as a "witness and keeper of Holy Writ." Jerome was a critic, not a theologian; not a commentator, but a translator. His Commentaries are chiefly valued for their abundant extracts from other writers; but in his preservation of a true text, in his interpretation of words and phrases, and in his witness to the Canon, no nobler service can be named than Jerome's, as fulfilling the Church's sacred duty as "the guardian of God's word."[3]

Jerome's singular fitness for his special work.—One

[1] The influence of the Vulgate upon our theological vocabulary has been immense. Cf. Justification, Sanctification, Predestination, Adoption, Redemption, &c. &c.

[2] "In exponendis sacris Scripturis. . . . Doctorem maximum." (Roman Breviary, Sept. 3).

[3] It is only fair to say that in his work against the Luciferians he furnished some of the arguments which our own Richard Hooker used and acknowledged, in combating the Puritan attack. The Puritans wished to treat the Roman Catholic clergy much as Lucifer treated the Arians, and so they denied that our Anglican orders could be valid, because received from mediæval sources. But Hooker argued, as Jerome did before him, that the unworthiness of ministers does not invalidate their ministry to those who rightly receive it. Cf. Article XXVI.

thought stands out above all others from this study of Jerome: it is God's marvellous preparation of the man for the work. History often repeats the lesson that God "*greatly provides* for mankind."[1] We have our little narrow views, our puny plans, our short-sighted policies, but the work of God moves on greater lines. Who of us would have chosen Jerome as the best agent in a great spiritual work which was to touch all ages? Yet he was God's "chosen vessel," wonderfully formed.

His education and travels, his studies in Rome, in Gaul, and in Syria, made him the needed link between Eastern and Western religion and learning. He was the one scholar of the day who united East and West. Moreover, his extensive journeys made him acquainted with men and things of different races, while his retentive memory stored what he learned for future use. Especially his knowledge of Bible lands gave him most useful acquaintance with Scripture scenes and Oriental customs.

Once again, he was a born linguist. Only a true linguist would have detected that the Galatians spoke a language similar to that which he had heard at Treves on the Moselle.[2] He speaks of himself as *trilinguis*, *i.e.*, as knowing Latin, Greek, and Hebrew; so that one of his chief qualifications was that he could read both

[1] The expression is found in a document of the reign of Edward VI.

[2] Both being branches of the Keltic stem. "Their own language (Galatian) is almost identical with that of the Treviri" (Preface to Galatians, ii.). Cf. the Welsh or Manx with the Armorican in Brittany to-day.

Old and New Testaments in their original tongues. He was the first Latin father who could do so.

Not least, he was a polished Latin scholar. His easy apt quotations from Cicero, Virgil, and Horace show how thoroughly at home he was in these and other classical writers. Once indeed at Antioch he had a dream which led him for a time to forsake all classical studies, but it was in the best interests of his work that he afterwards relaxed that resolve. In this dream he fancied himself summoned before the judgement-seat of Christ, who demanded what he was. He replied, "A Christian." "Thou liest," said the Lord; "thou art a Ciceronian, not a Christian: for where thy treasure is, there thy heart is also." To this rebuke was added a severe scourging, the marks of which (so Jerome declares) were visible in the morning, and in a dream-vow he renounced all secular studies.[1] Happily this experience drew him more closely to the pursuit of sacred learning, without leading him to neglect those stores of classic and antiquarian lore which enrich his language and adorn his style.

I prefer to quote the estimate of another as to the effect of this upon the Latin of the Vulgate. "No writer," says Dean Milman, "without that complete mastery over the Latin language which could only be attained by constant familiarity with its best models, could so have harmonised its genius with the foreign elements which were to be mingled with it, as to produce the fervid and glowing style of the Vulgate Bible.

[1] Letter xxii. 30.

. . . There is something singularly rich and (if we may so speak) picturesque in the Latin of the Vulgate: the orientalism of Scripture is blended up with such curious felicity with the idiom of the Latin, that . . . it both delights the ear and fills the mind."[1]

Even Jerome's monastic propensities were overruled for blessing. Never would the restless, sensitive, quarrelsome student have had time for such a work had he not been driven to the life of a recluse. What the castle of the Wartburg gave to Martin Luther, that the cave of Bethlehem gave to Jerome—quiet leisure to translate the Bible. Thus God in many ways fulfils His purposes of love to men.

Jerome's successors.—Lastly, who were Jerome's successors? Are we of this age in any way carrying on his work?

For many centuries Jerome had no great successor. "A few more letters of Augustine and Paulinus, and night falls on the West."[2] Yet Jerome's truest life-work was one which nothing could stay. To preserve, to translate, to foster and urge forward the study of God's Word was his highest ambition, his most precious legacy; and, however dark may have been the ages which succeeded the translation of the Vulgate, yet quietly and secretly the flame of love to the Bible was kept alive. Here and there faithful souls kept passing on that lamp which Jerome had rekindled, until at the Reformation it became a burning and a shining light.

It is hard to over-estimate the *educational impulse*

[1] Milman, "History of Christianity," 465. [2] Thierry.

which Jerome gave to religion. At first that impulse continued to vibrate mainly through the monasteries. The monks were Jerome's first successors, and the sacred fire of learning must have fared badly without them. Not only did they preserve the treasures of classic literature, but they copied the Scriptures, they taught the young, they preached to the heathen in an age when rapine and murder ran reckless through the land. If missionary zeal had almost died out before the Reformation, yet God's work, which seldom hurries, never rests; and the monasteries were for many years not only the successors of Jerome, but also the precursors of the Bible, the Christian Knowledge, and the Missionary Societies of to-day.

A singular irony has marked the later history of the Vulgate. Jerome's undoubted desire was to obtain the purest possible version, and to give it to the people for their use. It is flatly contrary to the spirit of his work to exalt the Vulgate Bible into the only authentic version,[1] while to hinder the progress of vernacular translation is to run counter to his dearest purpose. Jerome's true followers can never be those who hamper honest criticism, and who hide God's Word in "a tongue not understanded of the people."

The genuine successors of Jerome are those who love the Bible, study the Bible, and strive to give the Bible to the people in its purest form and in their own tongue. The Venerable Bede was one; John Wyclif

[1] This the Church of Rome has done by a decree of the Council of Trent.

was another, who gave to England a vernacular translation of Jerome's Vulgate. Erasmus and Luther, Tyndale and Coverdale, mark a still more fruitful epoch in the continuance of this work. Their Bible was Jerome's Vulgate. The translators of our own Authorised Version, and, in more recent times, those who patiently laboured at our Revised Version, have carried on the same work. In the same class we may place Henry Martyn's work in Persia, Bishop Steere's in East Africa, and that of many an unknown missionary in distant lands. All who are still translating God's Word into new tongues, and, not least, those societies which are promoting the circulation of their work throughout the world, are in the truest sense inheritors of Jerome's labours. In no age has the light which Jerome kindled burned more brightly than at the present day. We stand at the close of a century in which more doors of access for God's Word have been opened, and more new translations of the Bible made and circulated, than during the thousand preceding years. Such work is in true succession to Jerome's. He loved his Bible, and he longed that others should love it too. "Love thou the Scriptures, and wisdom will love thee." "Love the knowledge of Scripture, and you will no longer love the sins of the flesh." He was a student of varied attainments, a scholar of many brilliant parts; yet after all he was eminently *homo unius libri*, a man of the Bible. Therein lay his greatest strength; from it he derived his permanent renown. Jerome's influence will never cease until the priceless treasure of God's

Word has been enshrined in the language of every land.

May we not bring this lesson of Jerome's life even still more closely home? When the Goths swept over Italy, and Bethlehem was crowded with refugees from that land, Jerome's literary studies had almost to cease. He tells us how his resources were taxed to the uttermost, and how he had himself to labour in tending the sick and feeding the hungry. It was a time, as he felt, for translating the precepts of Scripture, not into words but into deeds, a time not for saying holy things but for doing them.

And in this way every one may follow St. Jerome. Written language is not the only medium of translation—not the only, nor even the most telling language, by which we can speak, to the hearts of men. The humblest Christian can make the Word of God speak in new tongues by the persuasive message of a saintly life. Thus to translate God's Word into holy living is within the reach of all. It is to carry on the work of Jerome.

St. Augustine.

BY THE

RIGHT REV. H. C. G. MOULE, D.D.

PRINCIPAL OF RIDLEY HALL, CAMBRIDGE
(NOW LORD BISHOP OF DURHAM).

ST. AUGUSTINE.

WE approach to-day one of the great names of all time. From well-nigh all points of view Augustine is eminent—in genius, in character, in labours, in vast and enduring influence, an influence already fifteen hundred years old, and powerful still. Eminent in the large details, his personality is pre-eminent in its total; and Augustine is always, to an extraordinary degree, not only impressive, not only attractive, but instructive too.

Aurelius Augustinus was born November 13, 354, at Tagaste, in Numidia, a spot now known as Tajelt, within the French province of Algeria. He died at Hippo, near the modern town of Bona, in Tunis, August 28, 430. His parents were middle-class people of moderate means, Patricius and Monnica. Patricius, the father, was not a Christian, but what would be called in modern missionary literature an inquirer or adherent, a catechumen. His character was rough and unrefined, though not without its better sides. He died a baptized and believing man. Monnica, the mother, was a saint indeed—the child of Christian

parents, carefully brought up, gifted with fine qualities of both head and heart, and above all a subject of the transfiguring and ennobling grace of God. Amidst the glorious company of Christian mothers, Monnica shines out a bright and particular star. Her son, in his great spiritual autobiography, the *Confessiones*, gives us a large and vivid portrait of her, with her equal strength and tenderness; her patient wisdom in meeting Patricius' unworthier characteristics; her maternal desires for her son's highest culture, but above all for the salvation of his soul; her unweariable patience of hope throughout his moral and mental wanderings; her ardour and labour in prayer for him; her energy and persistence in keeping touch with him; her triumphant joy over his conversion; her heavenly-mindedness; her yearnings for the eternal home. In the beautiful dialogue "Of the Blessed Life," the scene of which is laid at a country seat near Milan, soon after his conversion and baptism in that city, Augustine gives another portrait of his mother, whom he brings in as an interlocutor. She appears as a woman "conspicuous for strength of native sense, and occasionally speaks with a vigour and spirit which are evidently reported from the life, and show her as a woman who might have shone at any period for intellectual gifts. 'We fairly forgot her sex,' he writes, 'and thought that some great man was in our circle.'"[1]

[1] Smith and Wace, Dictionary of Christian Biography, art. "Monnica" (by the writer).

Under God, Augustine owed everything to Monnica. Well may he call her "his mother both in the flesh and in the Lord," and dwell upon the contagious power of her faith and love. Even in his darkest and most unsettled days, he confesses that he was as it were haunted by the name of his mother's Lord and Saviour, and could never be perfectly content with the thought or the eloquence from which it was absent.

But for many a sorrowful year Monnica had to yearn and mourn over her son, with hope deferred. The boy early showed signs of mental power, though by no means of patient application. He learned his first elements at Tagaste, and at sixteen was sent by his father to the University of Carthage, at a period, be it remembered, when the Roman world was passing into its last stages of moral disorder and decay, all too little checked by the influence of a Church which had begun to compromise with the world on one hand, and on the other to withdraw its most devoted members from their true work as the salt of human life, in obedience to the monastic idea. Augustine threw himself with ardour into the study of Latin literature, while he lacked, it would seem, the resolution to conquer the difficulties of Greek, to him a foreign tongue. It is doubtful whether he ever attained a genuine familiarity with Greek. He delighted, like Luther, in music, and made some studies in its theory; and his mind, at once penetrating and discursive, followed with the utmost interest the problems and theories of current philosophy, in-

cluding the speculations of Christian and semi-Christian heretical schools. Manicheism, which laboured to combine Parsism with Christian elements, and Neo-Platonism, which grafted the Brahminic philosophy upon the Platonic, while it felt the influence of Christianity as well, both in turn powerfully attracted his adolescent mind. For seventeen years, from his entering Carthage at sixteen till his conversion at Milan at thirty-three, the complex currents of the speculative thought of his time drew him hither and thither—always thinking, always asking, often getting profound insights, always conscious of unrest.

Who can wonder to hear that he wandered morally as well as mentally? The professing Christendom of our own day is wofully far from stainless as to the grosser forms of sin, even in its centres of light. What was the moral atmosphere in the Roman Africa of the fourth century, in the singularly dissolute Roman Carthage? We hear with shame, but without surprise, of Augustine's natural son, born in 372, when his father was eighteen. The youth promised an astonishing genius, but died at fifteen, in 386, soon after his baptism, by Augustine's side, at Milan. He was named Adeodatus.

I have just mentioned, by a long anticipation, Augustine's baptism. It did not occur till he was thirty-three years old. In childhood he had received the quasi-sacrament of salt and of the sign of the Cross, which labelled him a catechumen. In boyhood, when a serious illness threatened death, he begged for

baptism, and Monnica summoned in the pastor to administer it; but the illness gave way, the mother deferred the sacrament again, and unbaptized her son remained through the long following years of his roving thoughts and unhallowed indulgences.

This is no doubt a memorable incident in the history of Christian baptism. Those who hold that the children of Christians are not entitled to the great Seal of the Covenant till they personally repent and believe, are of course entitled to quote the example of St. Monnica. It is undoubtedly one evidence among many that the law of infant baptism was not at that time regarded as absolute, even in what we should call strict Church circles. But this, I venture to say, is no proof that it was not an Apostolic practice, and it is certainly no disproof of the cogency of the Scriptural argument for the right of the seed of the Covenant to the seal of the Covenant. As a matter of fact, the feeling of Monnica in the matter was very probably influenced, spiritually minded as she was, by something of the thought which had led Constantine to postpone baptism to his death-bed, the thought that the actual administration of the sacrament was an advantage (in regard of procuring Divine pardon) which should be husbanded, so to speak, to the utmost: to administer it before sin was actual in the life, and before repentance for sin was actual, would be to throw away a powerful engine of reconciliation with God. With such a thought long before, Tertullian had asked, "Why hurry the innocent infant to the remission of sins?"

It was a delusive view of the work of the holy ordinance, if I read Scripture aright; but it was intelligible. However, Augustine remained unbaptized, as did numbers of his young contemporaries. "Too often," he says, looking back from his conversion, "too often was it said, *Let him live as he pleases; he is not yet baptized.*"

Patricius died while Augustine was still a very young man, and Monnica was left to do her best for the son so ardently loved, and so wofully alienated from her in thought. The trial was at times fiery indeed for the widowed mother. She persevered in retaining him as an inmate with her. Often she was horror-stricken, to use his own words in the "Confessions," at the blasphemies of her son, then involved in the mazes of Manicheism. And her patience once nearly failed; she came to the resolve that, being what he was, he must no longer share her roof and her board. But a dream restored her hopes and courage. She saw in her visions of the night a youth, radiant, gladsome, smiling, standing on a wooden plank or beam—no doubt a suggestion of the Cross. "Be cheered," he seemed to say; "where thou art, there he yet will be." She told her son. He met her with the heartless criticism that it might only mean all the while that Monnica should yet join him among the Manichees. "Nay," she answered with characteristic readiness; "he said not, 'Where he is, thou shalt be,' but, 'Where thou art, he shall be.'" This was when he was about twenty-four. But her heart was sick with longing, though the brain and

the tongue were so brave. She went in agony to the bishop, and besought him to reason with her son. The good man, perhaps in wisdom, perhaps in his heart afraid of a formidable encounter, declined; and Monnica persisted; and then, losing his temper a little, truth to tell, *substomachans tædio*, the bishop begged the widow to retire; but as he did so he spoke words for ever memorable, words full of prophecy, not for Monnica only, but for many another Christian mother since: "Go, prithee, go; the son of those tears can never perish."

The son of those tears was first, however, to cause many more to flow. He had worked, not very successfully, as a university teacher at Carthage; even Augustine's force and genius could not command order in the lecture-room, where he taught rhetoric to a class of somewhat reckless young Carthaginians; and from the schools of Rome there came information of both better order and better remuneration. To Rome then he would go. The grief of Monnica was loud and bitter, for she believed that his soul must surely perish in the great metropolitan centre of vices. But he carried out his purpose, and that with a callous undutifulness which shows how sin and unchastened speculation had hardened a naturally susceptible and affectionate heart. He would go, and he would go alone. He allowed his devoted mother to prepare to accompany him; he persuaded her to spend the last night in prayer in a chapel dedicated to St. Cyprian; and before morning he was far on his way over the

Mediterranean Sea. Monnica's faith nearly failed, and she cried aloud in her despair. But the Lord meant blessing all the while. In Augustine's words, as he reviews the dreadful crisis, "Thou, Lord, in Thy deep counsels, didst deny her particular prayer to grant the prayer of all her life." He escaped from her, and he arrived at Rome. But it was just in the dreaded Italy that Christ awaited him, to make him His own for ever.

Monnica, unconquerable again, within a few months followed him over sea. By that time, illness and other circumstances had led him to leave Rome to seek academical employment at Milan. Ambrose was bishop of that city—Ambrose, who at thirty-four was still an able and eminent civilian, and only a catechumen in the Church. Then, suddenly (374), he was transformed into a bishop, in obedience to a popular cry—baptized and consecrated almost on the spot. Ambrose was exactly calculated, under God, to benefit Augustine. He was quite able enough to command his mental respect. He was indefatigably diligent, and loftily consistent as a Christian. He was eloquent; he was musical; he was emphatically a man and a leader of men. In him Monnica found an almost worshipped teacher, and Augustine one who could dispel the many strange misconceptions of orthodoxy in which he had allowed himself and could touch his conscience to the quick, and could stir his heart. Meantime the news of more than one remarkable incident of conversion, among men of mind

and position, reached him; all was tending towards the predestined blessing; providence and grace converged upon the goal of mercy.

The closing struggles of the man's soul were vehement. As in many another case, his difficulties seemed at first of the reason; they were found at length to be of the will. The master sins for him were pride, and those sensual desires which are found often, strange as the paradox always seems, deep in the midst of the largest intellectual life. The thought of the Christendom of his age tended powerfully to the position that the vowed celibate life was the only perfect alternative to impurity. It was a position, as I venture to hold, essentially and disastrously mistaken. But it was the distortion of a great truth, as most strong errors are; and perhaps for Augustine there was a need that the truth of the Gospel call to a total abstinence from carnal sin should be forced upon him with the weight of a distortion to drive it home. However, around that problem the inner struggle raged. The last crisis is detailed by the man's own pen. We seem to *see* him, discussing conversion and decision with his friends. He leaves the room abruptly for the garden, he walks up and down, he throws himself on the ground under a fig-tree; he hears a voice, natural or supernatural he never knew, crying, "*Take and read, take and read.*" He hurries back to the house, and to his friend Alypius. A copy of St. Paul lies on the table; he seizes it, and it opens at those mighty words, "*Put ye on the Lord*

Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof." It was the passing of the Rubicon for Augustine's soul; he found peace, where innumerable souls since his have found it—at the feet of Christ, for perfect pardon through faith; in the arms of Christ, for perfect keeping, through faith likewise, from the tempter's power.

Ambrose baptized him, on Easter Even, 386. Monnica's joy was exuberant; *exsultavit et triumphavit* when she heard of the saving change. After a brief and delightful retirement at a friend's villa near Milan, they prepared to return to Africa. The mother and son were in lodgings at Ostia before their embarkation; but one only was to sail. Augustine preserves for us the record of a conversation they held at the garden window in peace together. We read how both souls, the lifelong believer's and the rescued wanderer's, rose from theme to theme of thought and faith, till their being seemed to pass into the almost realisation of the eternal bliss. Then Monnica closed the colloquy with a few calm words about her finished work, and her desire to depart; and within ten days a fever had called her into the presence of the Lord. Augustine, struggling with unspeakable grief, buried her without a tear; but at last wept freely, having happily come to see that the outburst of such sorrow is no sin. Then soon he crossed the sea to Africa again, to leave it no more, labouring there for forty-three years, as the yet greater successor of Tertullian and of Cyprian.

For some four years he lived near his native Tagaste, with a few like-minded friends. It was a sort of community-life on an estate which they jointly owned, somewhat as Pascal and his friends lived on the lands of the forsaken Convent of Port Royal des Champs. His vast literary activity had already begun; he had written, in Italy or at Tagaste, two noble Dialogues, *De Ordine* and *De Beatâ Vitâ*, and works "on Genesis," and "on Music." Great indeed was to be the productiveness of his pen in the forty years to follow. The Benedictine edition of his works fills eleven folio volumes, and includes not only some of the most famous of the classics of the Church, as the "City of God," and the "Confessions," but a large mass of expository sermons, treatise upon treatise on themes of practical and doctrinal Christianity, and a whole literature in defence of the idea of the Church against the Donatists, and in defence of the free grace of God against the Pelagians.

In 391 he was ordained priest by the bishop of Hippo, a town in the modern Algeria. In 395 he became the bishop's coadjutor, and soon afterwards succeeded to the episcopal chair itself, to occupy it till his death. Augustine of Hippo is his designation for all time.

Elevation to the episcopate of an important district had come by Augustine's age, now that the Empire was nominally Christian, to carry with it a social and even political importance dangerous to the unwatchful soul. In Augustine's case, as we might expect with a

man of his spiritual and mental experience, the danger was effectually neutralised. In his high office, and in possession of an always growing personal influence in the Western Church at large, he lived from first to last a simple-hearted, humble-minded Christian, attentive to every duty, but rarely if ever, so far as it appears, obtruding upon others even his legitimate claims to deference. He made his house a sort of hostel for himself and his clergy; living simply and frugally, but with no elaborated asceticism; abundant in charity to the poor; labouring for the salvation and edification of souls; indefatigable in study and writing; and watchful meantime over the consistency of his immediate circle. One trait of his domestic life is memorable, and a lesson for every age and every company. On his dining-table he caused to be painted, or inlaid, two elegiac lines—

> "Quisquis amat dictis absentum rodere vitam,
> Hanc mensam vetitam noverit esse sibi."
>
> "If with the absent here thy tongue makes free,
> This table's a forbidden place to thee."

And when a party of bishops, gathered under his roof, fell one day into talk of the interdicted kind, Augustine rose and told his friends that either the conversation must cease or he must go.

In the course of his long life and work at Hippo, three memorable calls came to Augustine to act or speak in the interests of the Church or of the faith at large. These calls arose from the Donatist move-

ment, from the Pelagian controversy, and from the attacks of heathen thought upon Christianity, occasioned by the Gothic sack of Rome, in 410, and by the evidently imminent dissolution of the Empire of the West. I notice each of these great incidents as briefly as possible.

(1.) *The Donatists.*—Donatism was a separatist movement in the North African Church, a movement which, by Augustine's time, had been on foot for about a hundred years already. It arose with the cessation of the tremendous Diocletian persecution, early in the fourth century. The question then was, Were those Christian ministers who had surrendered the Scriptures to the persecutor to be promoted to higher dignities, or even to be recognised as in office at all? As was likely, the question called up a moderate party and a party of extremists or rigorists. The latter vigorously asserted the principle that the Church, to be the Church at all, must be actually pure. At Carthage the crisis was acute. A "moderate" bishop, Cæcilian, was opposed by a "rigorist" bishop, Majorinus, backed by a powerful following. Majorinus was succeeded by Donatus, and from him the movement got its name. A long and sorrowful history of conflicts, even physical conflicts, followed. The Donatists, while asserting a principle which was related to a profound truth, gave their cause away by impossible exaggerations of theory, and by allowing themselves to be dragged into partial complicity with the Circumcellions, fanatics who carried spiritual

theories into courses of actual violence and even bloodshed. And their own internal divisions discredited the Donatists still further: one circle after another proclaimed itself in turn the only truly pure community. Yet in Augustine's time North Africa contained 300 Donatist bishops, and the problem of Church cohesion was grave in the extreme. A council met at Carthage in 410, and Augustine inevitably was prominent in the discussions. The result, in which he actively concurred, was that the recalcitrant bishops, after receiving three successive requests to return to the central body, should be compelled to do so by force of law, with their flocks. The arm of the now nominally Christian State was thus for the first great occasion invoked by the Church to enforce her order. I for one cannot but profoundly regret the precedent. It was the first step on the incline at the foot of which stands the ghastly Inquisition of Spain, not to speak of the massacres of Provence and of the Alps, the stakes of Smithfield, the Dragonnades, aye, and acts of coercion not limited to the Church of Rome, as in Scotland in the seventeenth century and in Russia in the nineteenth. I deplore Augustine's action; yet we must judge him with a watchful equity. He had practically no experience behind him of the possible awful mischiefs involved in this compulsory interference of the State, called upon to crush for the Church a separatism which had to do, however imperfectly, with conscience. The evil of division seemed to be great and manifest; the action invoked might perhaps never need to be re-

peated. And as regarded penalties, Augustine certainly never dreamt of death as the last resort of infliction. Even Joseph Milner, strong and deep-sighted Evangelical as he was, bids us judge with great forbearance the action of Augustine in the Donatist conflict.

Meantime let it be noted with emphasis that Augustine in this controversy took a line about the theory of the Church far different from that which was widely held as orthodox after him. He denied *in toto* the Donatist position (akin in this respect to the Brethrenism of our own time), that the Church is the Church only when its membership is absolutely pure. But then he forcibly asserted that there are two sides to the matter. The Donatist had seen a truth, though he had distorted it. There is Church and Church, said he, Body and Body. There is the Church as man sees it—a vast society whose membership can be tabulated, whose sacraments are visibly administered by human agency, and which is mingled and imperfect. There is the Church as God sees it—a Church in this respect invisible, the company of the truly faithful, the living members of Christ, not mere foreign bodies in the organism. "Let all be baptized," he exclaims; "let all enter the church walls; the children of God are distinguished from the children of the devil only by love. Those who love not are not born of God." "Hypocrites, not only in eternity but now, are not truly in union with Christ, however they may *seem* to be in His Church." Augustine's teaching on this matter

was a powerful support to our own Reformers, when the Papal hierarchy sought to browbeat them out of their convictions by the crudest enforcement of the absolutism of what they meant by the Church Catholic. Ridley was perfectly Augustinian when he wrote: "That Church which is Christ's Body, and of which He is Head, standeth only of living stones and true Christians, not outwardly only in name and title, but inwardly in heart and truth."

(2.) *Pelagius.*—Pelagius was a monk, a native perhaps of Wales, perhaps of Ireland. He became prominent in Church life and thought about 409, when, with a friend, Cœlestius, he visited Rome, and there propagated his views on nature and grace. Discussions arose which agitated more or less the whole surface of Christendom, Eastern as well as Western. The new views, for they were certainly felt to be new, as now stated, by the Church in general, were arraigned and condemned at a council held at Carthage in 412. The teachers then moved to Palestine, expecting a milder verdict from the Orientals, and they were not disappointed. A synod at Lydda, then called Diospolis, absolved them of heresy, and commended them to the faithful. Again the African Church, inspired by Augustine, met at Carthage in 416, and reaffirmed the condemnation. The then Roman bishop, Innocent, concurred in this decision; but his successor, Zosimus, took the opposite view, and pronounced Pelagius orthodox. Again Carthage spoke in unwavering tones of

reprobation, in 418; and the Roman bishop came round to the same view. After this, Pelagianism in a modified form agitated the Gallic Church, and Augustine's influence and protests were continued in that direction. A synod at Valence, in 436, put a close to the agitation as regarded its public form.

And what was Pelagianism? In the briefest possible terms, it was the doctrine of nature *versus* grace. It was the assertion that man, the race of Adam, is not so hurt by Adam's mysterious fall that he needs a supernatural miracle that he may stand faultless, or, having stumbled, that he may rise again. "You have a good nature, and you start fair. Do your best, make the most of your powers, and virtue, stainless virtue, is quite within your reach. There is not so much as some teachers hold in the theory of a total collapse, and a spiritual death, and a mysterious helplessness, which yet leaves us guilty. Be a man, out and out, and you can be entirely holy."

So far as I can see, Pelagius was personally one of those characters which have never known a great moral conflict, a tremendous self-discovery. And so in a certain sense, like St. Paul in his early stage, he was "alive without the law." He went apparently quite straight in outward conduct. He seemed, at least to himself, to "have need of nothing." And meanwhile he met around him Christians who did hold the mystery of our fall, the ruin of our very nature; they confessed, as we do, that indeed "we have no power of ourselves to help ourselves;" but

they made the fatal mistake of using that awful and penetrating truth, not to drive them to the God of grace for power and victory, but to excuse themselves in sinning. "We are poor fallen creatures, and we cannot help it." In such persons a Pelagius would find the very occasion for a vigorous protest; and his own ignorance of his own fallen heart would develop that protest into a heresy. Unconscious of himself, unawakened to his own utter falling short of the true claims of eternal holiness, he allowed himself to say, in effect, "Man's plea that he is fallen is false; it is a mere covert for moral indolence; he has but to use his own powers in order to be good, to be holy, to be perfect."

Not that he rejected the word "grace"; but he put his own meaning on it. To him, it meant practically providence. Good parents were grace; a good school was grace; honest occupation was grace. Let nature use such advantages, and nature, with grace, would save itself.

It hardly needs saying that to Augustine, with his profound and awful experience of the human heart in his own case, all this was abhorrent. He met Pelagius in deliberate and persistent controversy—not willingly, not eagerly, and I think I may say never bitterly. But he met him with the uncompromising assertion that man is so fallen that nothing but a miracle can raise him; that nature, while in itself God's good workmanship, has so pulled itself down that only the Maker can rebuild it, and create it anew in Christ; that we

are lost, and must be found; that we are dead, and must be made alive. He knew too much of himself and too much of God to be a Pelagian.

In the course of the great controversy Augustine was led to examine Scripture, and to think and reason on a wide range of profound topics—the Divine election, foreknowledge, predestination, the relation of the human will to the Divine. As is well known, he took on all these points positions of great decision against man and for God, if I may so speak. This is not the occasion for more than a passing mention of these vast topics, which only ignorance or the most superficial thought will brush aside as cobwebs of the past. But throughout the great argument the central idea of Augustine is fixed and luminous. It is that while man's ruin is altogether of himself, man's salvation, first, last, midst, in all the links of all the chain, is of God alone. "By grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast."

In the providence of God, Augustine's labours against Pelagius had an influence which has been immortal in the Church of the West, in all its ages and in all its divisions. He is in this respect the spiritual and mental father of Anselm, of Bernard, of Aquinas, of Wyclif, of Luther, of Calvin, of Hooker, of Jansen, of Pascal, of Owen, of Leighton. Wonderful man! For he is also equally or almost so the spiritual father of the best schools of mystic theology, the theology of the inner life, of the soul in God. So had his Master

gifted him, that alike the most luminous masters of Christian dogmatics, and the saints who have lived deepest in the inner sanctuary of experience, find their friend and teacher in Augustine.

(3.) *The fall of Rome, and the attitude in consequence of heathen thought.*—I mention this great incident only because it occasioned Augustine's most monumental literary effort, the vast treatise, *De Civitate Dei*, published near the end of his life. Its purpose is to meet the cavil that Christianity had brought the Empire to its ruin. He follows the charge from point to point, giving as he goes an awful picture of the condition, for ages then past, of classical society, and developing the great idea of the true Kingdom of God, the antithesis not to the state, but to the world; the kingdom begun here and to be perfected and unveiled hereafter in the eternal life of the saints in glory. The book is at once a deep mine of historical and literary treasures, and a long appeal for the truth to the reason and the soul.

I hasten to the close. One important point in the theology of Augustine I must not omit as I do so. I mean his attitude towards Holy Scripture. Augustine was an ardent Biblicist. In his youth, he tells us, he had found Scripture insipid. Since he knew his soul and his Redeemer it was everything to him. He delights in asserting its supreme authority as the Rule of Faith. "Let the Donatists give us Scripture for their position, and we believe." "In Cyprian, where he does not agree with Scripture, I respectfully reject

Cyprian." "Where we have not clear proof from Scripture, human presumption must restrain itself." "In the writings of orthodox men, I am free; to the Canonical Scriptures alone I owe unreserved assent." "If an angel from heaven preach to you anything beyond what he have received in the Scriptures, let him be anathema." "Not even Catholic bishops must hold any opinion contrary to Scripture." "We must not be diverted from Scripture by any catena of opinions." Such is his consistent tone. True, in one striking passage, he says that he would not believe even the Gospel without the Catholic Church. But he is dealing with the historic aspect of the matter. A Gospel, if we could conceive it, coming to us without any connection with an historical community witnessing to its genuineness, would be to him a practically suspicious thing. But that is a totally different conception from that of the right of the Church to reserve the Gospel, or the strange dream that the Church wrote the Gospel, or that the Gospel can be understood only so far as the Church explains it. Such theories, I venture to say, were unknown to Augustine's mind.

I might linger, did I dare, to point out the instructive wealth of evidence in his writings that the tenet of Transubstantiation, and indeed any genuine approach to it, was not within his view.

But this must not be. The hour flies and is ready to expire, and we must follow Augustine to his last pathetic scene.

It is August 430, and he is seventy-six. Hippo is

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